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MEMOIR

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LIFE AND CHARACTER

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OF THE

REV. SAMUEL BACON, A. M.

LATE,

AN OFFICER OF MARINES

IN THE UNITED STATES' SERVICE: AFTERWARDS,

ATTORNEY AT LAW

IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA: AND SUBSEQUENTLY,

A MINISTER OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH,

AND

PRINCIPAL AGENT

Of the American Government for persons liberated from Slave-Ships, on the Coast of Africa;

Where he terminated his Life in the month of May, 1820.

BY J. ASHMUN.

WASHINGTON CITY:

Sold by the Booksellers of the District of Columbia; Richmond; Petersburg; Norfolk; Baltimore; Philadelphia; New York; New Haven, and Boston.

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December, 1821.

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DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, *to wit:*

S.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the tenth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the forty-sixth, J. Ashmun, A. B. of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof he claims as author and proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

"Memor of the Life and Character of the Rev. Samuel Bacon, A. M.
"Late an Officer of Marines in the United States' service: afterwards,
"Attorney at law in the State of Pennsylvania: and subsequently, a
"Minister of the Episcopal Church, and Principal Agent of the
"American Government for persons liberated from Slave-Ships, on the
"Coast of Africa; where he terminated his Life in the month of
"May, 1820. By J. Ashmun."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also to the act, entitled "An act supplementary to an act, entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein menioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the public seal of my office, the day and year aforesaid.

EDM. I. LEE,
Clerk of the District of Columbia.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The late Rev. Samuel Bacon, about two years previous to his lamented death, commenced the preparation of a sketch of the principal events of his life. In this undertaking he was induced to engage, in the expectation of deriving some personal benefit from the recollections which the labour would supply his own mind; and of gratifying and profiting a few friends, to whose perusal it might be proper to offer the narrative. Of this sketch he drew up an outline; in which, were put down, little besides the dates of the principal occurrences of his history, down to the year 1817, and an enumeration of such related subjects as he proposed to discuss in detail. The first chapter only of this outline, was all he lived to complete.

His religious journal kept during the the years 1817—18 and 19, describes the progress of his mind in that important concern, with great fidelity: and his correspondence, and separate papers, written at different periods, and on a variety of

subjects, are numerous and extensive:—and taken together, they have furnished abundant materials for the illustration of every important trait of his character, and the preservation of the most interesting incidents of his life.

Few of his manuscripts were intended for publication, at all; and none of them, in the state in which they came into the author's hands: he has therefore used the necessary liberty of correcting the style and phraseology of nearly all the passages introduced into the memoir: but in no case has the sense of the original been voluntarily perverted, nor his emendations obtruded upon it unnecessarily. In the illustration of subjects not essential to the sketch, he has commonly either filled an outline, or followed out an intention, contained in Mr. Bacon's papers: but for the manner in which this department of the work has been executed, and for the remarks interspersed, perhaps too freely, along with the incidents of the narrative, he is alone answerable.

On several topics he has been induced to dilate, with a view to commend them

to a larger share of the public interest. This remark applies, particularly, to the concise statement of the objects and measures of the AMERICAN COLONIZATION SOCIETY; with which, indeed, the latter part of Mr. Bacon's history is inseparably connected. From this cause, the writer has never withheld those testimonials of his hearty attachment, which the best use of his humble talents in its behalf, has been able to confer.

To several of the friends of the late Mr. Bacon, who have kindly supplied the deficiencies of his papers, he expresses his gratitude: and humbly commends the work to the blessing of God, and the candid reception of all whom the example of its pious subject is capable of benefiting.

J. ASHMUN.

Washington City, December, 1821.

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MEMOIR

OF THE

REVEREND SAMUEL BACON.

CHAP. I.

The beneficial effects of a pious man's life are but partially realised, if, at its close, the world is denied a record of his example. And when to eminent piety, were superadded a public character, active zeal and extensive usefulness, the obligations of duty and interest conspire with the gratitude of survivors, in requiring them to cherish and perpetuate his memory. In the inducement for presenting to the public a memoir of the late Rev. Samuel Bacon, all these considerations have their full influence. But the trait which shone most resplendently in his character, and on account of which his memorial will long survive him, and his biography be chiefly valued, is that of his entire devotion to his Saviour. In the last years of his life 'his conversation was indeed in Heaven,' and 'his walk with God.' Superior to sectarian attachments,

his fellowship was with the universal company of the faithful; and his religion was that of the Bible. Its transforming energy received a full exemplification in the total change which it produced in his character, the altered course of his pursuits, and the celestial elevation which it imparted to all the affections of his mind. His piety, in short, was characterised with a strength and sublimity, of which even our privileged age is believed to have furnished very few examples.

He was a native of the county of Worcester in the state of Massachusetts; where he passed the twenty-three first years of his life. The paternal ancestor from whom his branch of the family descended, came to America about one hundred and twenty years ago, and settled in the province of Massachusetts bay, near Boston. Passing alone in the night, during a violent storm of snow, across the isthmus which connects Boston with Roxbury, he lost his way on the narrowest part, plunged with his horses into the wintry surf, and miserably perished. On the same night was born the grand-father of Samuel. The father had been induced by the expectation of this event, to visit the town on the preceding day, in order to procure necessaries for the occasion. This is the family tradition.

A New England farmer has little interest in tracing the genealogy of his ancestors above the last, or the second preceding generation; and seldom has any other means of rescuing the

events of their particular history from oblivion, than by recourse to the memory of the oldest living members of the family. The occurrences of the last age, to such as are laboriously employed in the humble occupations of the present, and have their thoughts and their time engrossed by their immediate duties, have receded too far, and are viewed as too detached and separate from the actual scenes of life, to be the objects of much inquiry. Hence, few events indeed, of their domestic history, survive the individuals personally conversant with them, above half a century. But, from the patriarchal age to which nearly every individual of Mr. Bacon's family attained, its memorials subsequently to the catastrophe above noticed, are sufficiently numerous and certain.

The causes to which the emigration of the first settlers of Massachusetts may be traced, operated almost entirely upon a particular class of the English community. The early regulations of the community conspired with this circumstance, to produce among them an almost perfect identity of character: and, with the exception of their ministers, whose superior education and talents gave them a deserved distinction, they all held nearly the same rank in society. This, although humble, was not abject; and the experiment has proved it to be better adjusted to the preservation and advancement of

general piety, prosperity and happiness, than any other.

Mr. Bacon's American ancestors were farmers,—the proprietors of the soil which they cultivated with their own hands; procuring by incessant industry and strict frugality, a moderate competency for themselves, and their numerous families. Ephraim Bacon, the progenitor whose birth has been mentioned, after attaining to manhood, removed from Roxbury to Woodstock, in that part of Connecticut contiguous to the county of Worcester in the state of Massachusetts. There he settled, reared eight children, and died at an advanced age. The family constitution is remarkably vigorous. Of the eight children of Ephraim Bacon, seven are sons, and all are believed to be living at the present time. The age of the youngest is sixty, and of the oldest, about eighty-four. Sickness, except from casualties, is almost unknown to the family: all of whom "bore the appearance of the freshness of youth, even to middle age."

Ephraim Bacon, the eldest of these brothers, removed at the age of twenty-four, to Sturbridge in Worcester county, about thirty miles from the paternal residence at Woodstock; where he obtained one hundred and fifty acres of land, then in an uncultivated state; built a house with his own hands, and married Hannah Chamberlain. His removal took place about the year 1762. These were the parents of Samuel Bacon, who

was the youngest of nine children, and born at Sturbridge, July 22d, 1781. His mother who died in 1790, is thus characterised in the affectionate language of her late son: "Her spirit was that of gentleness; kind, pious, charitable, and humble. She knew but little enjoyment in this world. I never but once recollect seeing her out of her room. She was five years sick of a consumption, and nearly all that time confined to her room,—commonly to her bed. Her parentage was respectable. So much was she beloved and esteemed by all, that a general joy seemed to pervade her christian friends, when they heard of her release from sufferings, by an exchange of worlds. Her last words were a charge to her husband respecting her young children. For myself in particular, she had great solicitude. She often wished 'Samuel might be like Samuel of old.'"

The surviving parent continues, at the age of eighty-four years, to occupy the same farm, surrounded with the scenery of his youthful days, from which he seems never to have been many weeks absent. "It is there,"—writes his son with feelings prompted by filial tenderness, and characterised with much of the simplicity of nature, "It is there, he has laboured nearly sixty years at the plough, the scythe, the axe and the flail. It is there, his nine children were born. The spot is rendered sacred by the death of three children and a wife. There, often, very

often, has the morning sun found him upon the hills before him, and the evening star has a thousand times lighted him at his labours. It is that spot which has been moistened by his sweat and his tears: there, have the wild and rugged rocks echoed the expressions of his grief, and his mirth. It is that soil, which, for many years sustained the firmness of his youthful tread, and now feels the tottering footsteps of his age."

The religious character of parents must always materially affect that of their children. Of his mother, the subject of this memoir remarked, that, "for the time at which she lived, she exhibited uncommon evidence of a truly pious character," and took much pains to impress his mind with the truths of religion. With her husband, she was a professor of religion, and member of the Baptist church; in which connexion he still continues. During Samuel's minority his father occasionally observed the forms of religion in his family; but appears at that period, very imperfectly to have understood its nature, and to have known little of its power.

A general trait of the laborious yeomanry of New England, where the refining influence of the gospel has not imparted a softened tone to the affections of the mind, is roughness, and severity of temper. To the formation of this characteristic, a number of very obvious physical, and other causes growing out of their circumstances, directly conspire. It may easily con-

sist, as commonly it does, with perfect inflexibility of principle, and correctness of moral deportment. And such, until advanced much beyond the limit of mature life, was the father of Samuel Bacon. "He possessed," according to his son's relation "a good education; a strong and masculine understanding, equal to all the affairs of life; sound reasoning powers; fertility of invention; a good judgment, and an enterprising, intrepid character: but no gentleness. Suffice it to say, that to this day, while I feel the love a son should feel, I almost tremble in his sight. But blessed be God, and I record it with gratitude, the scene is now changed. The religion of Jesus Christ has imparted its meekness to that rigid bosom, and the sun-set of his life is almost without its clouds. It is serene, and mild, and peaceful, as the closing eve."

Another kindred quality which the necessity of severe and unremitting labour is extremely apt to beget in persons situated remote from the more fascinating objects of human pursuit, is excessive frugality. Of the extent of this propensity in a father charged with the provision of a numerous family, it must be allowed that a son, ardently bent on acquirements which would place him above the humble rank inherited by the family, and which by a prescriptive association, was now identified with its very name, is not the best judge. Other reasons not so well seen, might unite with the penurious disposition of a

parent, or operate without it, to induce him to oppose even unwilling hinderances to his son's more liberal pursuits. It is still true, that the needless severity of his father at this period, and the measures adopted for the government of the family, impressed on the intellectual and moral character of young Bacon, effects, of which many adhered to him until an advanced stage of his life, and some were retained to its very close.

The circumstances which go to form the sentiments of a New Englander, on almost every subject, cannot be appreciated, nor his character understood, without a particular survey of the constitution and usages of the society from which he receives all his early impressions.

The county divisions throughout New England, differently from those of most of the other states, scarcely serve any other purpose than that of a convenient classification of the population, and to define the jurisdiction of magistrates and inferior courts. But the corporate rights of the towns, or sections of from four to six miles square, into which all the counties are sub-divided, are guarded by the people, as forming the palladium of their social prosperity. The officers of these corporations are, "one, three or five select men. They are called the fathers of the town. There is also an assessor, a constable and a treasurer, a few tything men, a town clerk, and other inferior officers. They have annual town meetings in March

when these officers are chosen. At these meetings any by-laws can be passed which are not inconsistent with the laws of the state and the United States, for their internal regulation; and any sum of money voted for the support of the gospel and schools, and for the construction of roads. The constitution recognises the duty of every citizen to contribute a just proportion of his property for the maintenance of public worship, and his obligation to attend upon it: and every man is in effect, supposed by law to be a congregationalist,* there being in nearly every town a decided majority of that denomination,—until the contrary is shown. This denomination, is hence called 'The standing order.' The increase of other christians in the state has occasioned loud complaints of the inconveniences which they experience from the operation of this system. Among the other things transacted in the town meetings, the question is put by the moderator 'How much money will you raise this year for the support of schools?' Several motions are made, proposing different sums. At length a certain sum is voted. It is then assessed on the inhabitants in proportion to their property, and goes to swell the aggregate of the taxes for the state and county, and for religious instruction, together with which it is collected, and goes into the town treasury. Each town

* See Appendix, Note I.

being divided into a convenient number of wards, so that each ward may have as nearly as may be, an equal number of inhabitants, of whom no one shall be more than two or three miles from a school; this sum is divided amongst the several wards in due proportion. The law provides under a heavy penalty, that each town, containing a certain number of inhabitants, shall maintain a grammar-school during the year. But this provision is partially compromised by the dividing of their towns into wards as above stated, and supporting a school three months in each, during the winter season; which is considered as equivalent to a whole year, or more, in one place. This practice has at last grown into a general system, especially in country towns. Many however, raise money enough to support constant schools in each ward. During the summer season while the boys are called off to assist in the labours of husbandry, the country schools are instructed by women; in which girls are taught common needle-work, and other appropriate branches, and the young children acquire the rudiments of learning.

"The school money, it has been said, is deposited in the treasury of the town. A school committee-man is appointed at the town meeting for each ward. It is his duty to obtain a teacher. He generally applies to some neighbouring college or academy, and finds one suitable for his purpose. No person is allowed to teach without

having been previously examined by the clergyman of the town, in which he proposes to teach, and recommended by him as competent for the business. He must also have a certificate of the select-men of the town where his settlement or home is, that he sustains a good moral character. This done, he may begin, otherwise he is liable to a penalty for teaching. The select-men, the committee-man of each ward, and the clergymen of the 'Congregational order,' are, ex officio, a committee to examine the schools in the town, to report as to their proficiency, and censure or applaud accordingly. In respect to education the great benefits to be derived from granting to towns corporate privileges like these, is apparent. When the teacher has completed his contract, he makes out his account, charging the town with so much service in teaching, at such a price per month. This is passed by the select-men, and paid by the treasurer. Thus the rich and the poor are on the same footing as to the necessary branches of an education. Indeed, the poor have the advantage, for the taxes are levied according to the property which each possesses; and the poor who pay nothing, still enjoy all the benefits of the school. The other advantages of the system require no explanation."

The nature of the provision made by law for the support of religious instruction and public worship in Massachusetts, is accurately under-

stood by few, even of our own citizens, who live in the states where no such provision exists.

In the *Declaration of Rights,* which serves as the basis of legislation, for that state, it is assumed, that "piety, religion, and morality" are necessary for the temporal well-being of the community; and that the support of the teachers and institutions of religion, are necessary to the prevalence and influence of religion itself. In conformity with this principle, it is declared to be the duty of every person to contribute an equitable proportion towards the support of religious institutions; and, where there exists no conscientious impediment, occasionally to attend at some place of public worship. It is further declared to be the privilege of every town or parish, to choose its own religious teachers; and that, among the ministers actually so chosen and officiating, every individual shall have the right of directing the application of his own tax, agreeably to his choice. As all preference to any particular denomination of Protestant christians, is expressly disclaimed, the laws grounded on these principles, can be partial in their operation only from the influence of circumstances. It however, deserves to be inquired, whether even the known or probable *circumstances* which may obstruct their uniform operation, do not render them justly exceptionable.

The dissatisfaction expressed by the despisers and neglecters of every form of religion,

merits very little regard, provided religion be a public blessing. There will then remain two classes only, in relation to whom these laws can be considered as even apparently partial, or severe. The first, consists of those conscientious persons who, too weak in the respective parishes where they reside, to obtain, and provide agreeably to law, for a minister of their own, are obliged to contribute towards the support of one in whose election they could not concur, and on whose ministrations they do not attend. Here is certainly plausible ground of complaint: still, the question of the expediency of the system, must be decided by determining whether its advantages to the community, outweigh these partial inconveniences. The sense of a majority of the people of these states, has always, till very recently, declared itself in favour of the affirmative of the inquiry. The question is of acknowledged importance, and of very difficult solution. Another class of persons are honestly opposed to the principle of any legal interference whatever, in matters of religion. But this is manifestly, one of those extreme doctrines, which the framers of our general constitution were too wise not to perceive to be utterly impracticable; and therefore, did not attempt to consecrate by its admission into that instrument. All that they attempted, was to restrain to its proper limits, the degree of legal interference on this subject. Civil government, without the sanctions of religion,

must fall; and therefore, to guard the inviolability of these sanctions, and even to increase their force, is a duty connected with that of self-preservation.

The union of these two classes, seconded by the indifference of too great a number to religion, and its institutions, in general, has very recently obtained for them as favourable a modification of the statute laws as they can admit, without a palpable violation of their constitution.

It would be thinking too favourably of human nature to suppose that the religious order almost exclusively privileged by the operation of the former system, should not, in some instances have asserted their legal rights with a precision, and enforced them by measures but little calculated to conciliate the affections of their dissenting brethern. The worst form in which the execution of these laws ever appeared, was in the legal processes which followed the refusal of persons of other denominations, voluntarily to pay the tax which they required. In cases of this sort, where the clergyman for whose support the money was assessed, either could not, or would not relinquish it, the goods of the recusant were distrained and sold, to produce it. The odium which could not fail to attach, in the popular mind, to transactions of this nature, has unquestionably gone further to weaken the interest of the Congregational cause, than all those extreme measures, could ever do

to strengthen it. For, the shape which the complaint of the sufferer assumed with something more than the semblance of truth, was, that 'his goods had been sacrificed for the support of a religion which he did not believe, of a clergyman whom he only knew as his oppressor, and of a form of worship which he never attended.'

The genius of the evangelical dispensation doubtless demands the voluntary contribution of christians for the support of its institutions. The members of a christian community certainly may consent to give to these contributions the form of an equalised tax, without, in the least, impairing the liberality of the principle on which they are made. Nor would this effect necessarily follow the investing of their civil rulers with power to organize the system of taxation, and provide for its being carried into effect. But, in order to avoid those offences which would powerfully tend to defeat the good intention of this arrangement, so far as the promotion of pure religion is concerned, it is necessary that the community should possess an uncommon share of piety, and that their acquiescence should be cheerful, unconstrained, and general. Such was once the character of a large portion of the New England population; and the happiest consequences resulted from the public provision made for the support of religion, with very few of its evils. And on that basis, was, in a great measure, built the deserved reputation of those states for reli-

gion and morality; of which, after all proper abatements are made, there certainly remains a substantial fund, that no other christian country of equal population can justly claim.*

In this community, under institutions such as have been described, and in a secluded country situation, the subject of this memoir acquired the rudiments of knowledge and letters, received his first religious impressions, and formed all his early habits. His parents being Baptists, are to be ranked among the non-conformists of the time, and experienced in consequence, inconveniences which gave to their son's mind an early bias against† the principle of religious taxation, which he never afterwards entirely dismissed. The death of his mother, before he had completed his tenth year, left him entirely dependent on the religious instruction and superintendence of his father, who, except affording him an opportunity of frequenting public worship, in a great measure neglected it. Being, by the ecclesiastical system of that denomination, denied any visible connexion with their church, the kind and degree of religious tuition which he received from an occasional attendance on its public services, may be named any thing else with more propriety, than a regular religious education. He had on several occasions very affecting impressions of the awful interests

* See Appendix, Note II. † See Appendix, Note III.

of eternity, during his boyhood: but his acquaintance with the principles of the gospel was so imperfect, and his notions of religion so vague and confused, that these emotions always passed off with the cause which excited them, and tended in the event, to harden and pervert, rather than permanently to benefit him.

His alarm on these occasions, appears to have consisted only of a general apprehension that his soul was unsafe, and that wrath was reserved for him on account of his sins. His knowledge of the evangelical system was nearly restricted to the doctrinal facts that there were a resurrection, a judgment, a Heaven and a Hell; that the Son of God had died for the benefit of man, and that sins were in some way expiated through his sufferings. To a more perfect insight into the truths of salvation, he had none both able and disposed to guide him,—a condition of his early lot, which he afterwards found occasion to deplore, as his heaviest calamity. The impressions which his mind had received from the affectionate solicitude for his spiritual welfare manifested by his mother during her protracted illness, contributed greatly to heighten the constitutional tenderness of his feelings, and quicken the operations of conscience; and in their general effects, had a lasting influence on his character. But, to her prayers in his behalf, he afterwards attributed a more important agency, in his salvation.

Shortly after the death of this beloved parent, he relates his first serious religious convictions to have taken place; which appear to have been produced by the superstitious construction that his neighbours gave to a very natural circumstance. A common plant had sprung up on his mother's grave, which from its vigorous growth and uncommon form, gave occasion to some very weak predictions of an ominous nature, that much alarmed him. The predictions of course, failed; but the impressions, as they gave his thoughts a strong direction towards religious things, might have proved salutary, had he enjoyed at the time, the guidance of a judicious and pious spiritual instructor. This occurrence was in his eleventh year. His time from this period, became more occupied in the laborious business of the farm, and a small portion only, was left for the improvement of his mind in the rudiments of learning.

Before the recent multiplication of books in that part of the country, the course of reading to which a country youth was obliged to confine himself, was commonly very limited. The branches in which instruction was afforded in the common schools, were those of reading, writing, and common arithmetic. A brief elementary treatise on each of these subjects, the Bible, Watt's Psalms and Hymns, and a very few hereditary domestic volumes, commonly on religious subjects, constituted the only library to which

he could have recourse. Thus situated, it would be a solecism to suppose that a young person, however constitutionally disposed to intellectual pursuits, should acquire a taste, or form a habit of reading. The character of young Bacon's mind was unusually contemplative and susceptible ; but, from the paucity of objects on which his thoughts could dwell with advantage, and the entire absence of those excitements so necessary to the development of its faculties, his cogitations were of a very unfruitful kind : and whole years past off without any sensible advancement in knowledge, or much mental improvement. This contemplative turn made it "impossible," he states, "for me to work alone. Whenever I attempted it I soon fell into a profound reverie on the heavens, on the trees, the birds, the plants, and scenery about me, and would for hours be lost in thought; my axe or hoe would fall from my hand, and I would think no more of it until roused by the approach of my father or some one of the family. I then would seize my implement, and ply it with the greatest activity and the most poignant regret for the time I had lost." This trait was censured by his frends, and at that time lamented by himself, as a very unfortunate one ; and tended, in conjunction with the domestic discords that had multiplied in consequence of the second marriage of his father, to embitter the whole of his subsequent residence under the paternal roof.

To this latter circumstance his writings several times allude, in the language of grief tempered with filial respect. He deplores it as the fatal cause of domestic disorganization, of the destruction of family religion, and the neglect of parental instruction, in the little scene which he was obliged to consider, but could never feel to be, a "home." Its effects on his character were lasting. They may be traced in something like a morbid dejection of spirits, which the happiest scenes of his life were not able wholly to correct; and the want of early discipline manifestly aggravated the natural irascibility of his temper. But though occasionally passionate, and always ardent in his attachments and pursuits, he was not vindictive; and the natural temperament of his mind was uncommonly mild, placable and affectionate. Cut off, by his situation, from many of the temptations to vice, and opportunities of indulging in the seducing amusements which smooth the path of ruin to thousands of the youth of our cities, he was addicted to no open immoralities; but still, grew up a stranger to piety, to himself and to his God. Obscure as his path in life was, and harmless as were his pursuits, they both lay in the world. And though ill at ease with himself, he did not at this time know to what a debased state of moral wretchedness, the "corruption of his nature" had consigned him; nor what he required to

compose an accusing conscience to peace, and impart happiness to his mind.

In his thirteenth year, a stronger religious bias was given to his thoughts, than ever before. He was suddenly and strangely seized, in his bed, with a distressing affection, probably of an epileptic nature, which threatened to terminate in immediate death. The family were aroused. His father, who sometimes prayed in the domestic circle, at his request, engaged in earnest intercession for him. He was greatly affected by the petition, "Spare thy young servant, who believes himself dying," which he could never forget. The paroxysm of his disorder passed off for that time; but the whole circumstance made an impression which he was not able soon to dismiss. On this occurrence, he subsequently remarked, "Had I at that time been taught the way of salvation, and had the true nature of my case then been explained to me, the effect might have been most salutary; my whole life afterwards, might have been a happy and useful one. But I fear there was no one about me who knew for himself, 'the way, the truth and the life;' and of course, there was none to instruct me. Although my father prayed, yet I neither attempted, nor was I directed to do it myself. I was entirely ignorant of the plan of salvation;—a young Hindoo could scarcely be more so."

In the occasional struggles which took place in his mind, at this time, and for the space of

three or four years afterwards, he recognised at a subsequent period, the 'striving of the spirit of God.' But his ignorance concurred with his natural depravity, gradually to stifle and extinguish the divine influence. Seldom did his religious convictions lead him farther, than occasionally to repeat the Lord's prayer on retiring to rest. As he advanced towards manhood, even this semblance of religious duty was neglected, and a confirmed spiritual stupor rested on all the faculties of his mind.

The five subsequent years of his life afford scarcely any thing of interest or variety worth recording. He more seldom read the scriptures, than formerly; and fast wore out of his feelings, the slight religious traces of his earlier years. The laborious scene upon which his life had opened, and the limited range of objects to which it confined him, were equally suited to repress the active mental energies which lay unconsciously buried in his breast. His straitened circumstances, and even the garb in which he was obliged to appear, forbade him to associate on terms of equality, even with his rustic companions; and produced a feeling of inferiority, which discovered itself in an embarrassed deportment, and became so much a habit, as never, he confessed, entirely to leave him.

In his eighteenth and nineteenth years, he accounted himself happy in being able to obtain, by earnest intreaty, the pitiful privilege of ex-

iling himself from his father's roof, and labouring for a neighbouring farmer. This alternative afforded him neither emolument, nor mitigation of toil; his wages being applied to pay a substitute for performing his services at home. But it removed him from beneath the depressing frown of a parent, and from the din of too frequent domestic discord and recriminations.

Blinded indeed, must that parent be by the strength of habitual passion, who does not see, and callous, in the extreme, his breast, if he does not feel, for the effects which such treatment of a child, and especially, which such an example, must infallibly have on his character, and happiness. In the sacredness of the domestic retreat his little interests all instinctively centre. It is nearly all the world he knows. The first objects which his tender mind opening into existence, ever learns to love and venerate, are the names of mother, sister and father. On that soft area the young and unpractised powers of the soul and body, make their first simple and imitative efforts. Here are shed more tears than water the whole path of life, besides; and here, are tasted the liveliest joys which the world has power to awaken. Example, at this period of life, not only makes a deep impression, but exerts a transforming influence upon its susceptible subject. Hither, he instinctively looks back from all his little excursions into the rougher and stranger scenes of that life to which riper age is destined,

for rest, instruction and solace. Who, that has once been young, and whose childhood ever had a home, but feels in reviewing that most innocent and delicious period of his existence, these softening recollections steal over his soul 'till they dissolve it? If virtue, if piety itself have a congenial soil on earth, it must be here. And here, the economy of Heaven has designed that it should be. It is nature's appointment, confirmed by the concurrent injunction of the gospel: 'fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.' Relying on the grace with which he who gave, is willing to accompany a sincere endeavour to obey this command, parents may train their offspring to love and fear their Saviour. But, associate in the youthful mind, with the idea of a father, the image of terror: divest home of its endearments and of its sacredness: admit contention, malevolence and dislike, to usurp in that retreat, the places of the opposite charities: let the natural guardians of his morals, present too, an example of passionateness and strife: drive him by needless severity, to look to strangers and the world, for an asylum from domestic persecutions: and take into the account the child's inexperience, the volatility of the animal spirits, the weakness of reason, and above all, the deep moral corruption of his nature; and a miracle of God's providence and grace must preserve him, from the stupefac-

tion of all feeling on the one hand, or from outrageous profligacy and depravation of principle on the other.

That young Bacon suffered in both these respects, and in the latter with some severity, is less to be wondered at than regretted. When man suffers himself, even through inadvertence, to derange the most important part of the system contrived by the wisdom of his Maker, for the formation of young immortals to his service, the deed is perilous, and the consequences may be, beyond calculation, disastrous.

CHAP. II.

Who, that has not observed its progress, and marked its increasing volume and strength, would imagine that the little rill from the hill-side, could ever swell to a navigable expanse, and pour a tributary flood into some neighbouring ocean? Or, who that contemplates separately and alone, the first in a train of events which have conspired to produce in the moral world, the most magnificent results, could possibly connect it with its end? The river must be traced in its descent, the links of the chain must be numbered, or we should never credit the increase of the one, or the wonderful continuity and connexions of the other. To how slight a circumstance can every reflecting person refer the origin of some of the most momentous passages of his life! The most edifying impressions of the universal agency of the Supreme Ruler of the world, may be derived from contemplating the progress of his own counsels, from stage to stage, in the way of their fulfilment. The opposition of human wisdom and strength, only discovers their own weakness and folly. All human estimates of the probable chances of their success and failure, are mocked by the results.

> "There's a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them how we will:"

And, happily for man, although his weakness and his ignorance cannot thwart, nor comprehend the plans of Heaven, yet may they submit to be instructed and guided; and this is all that his duty and his happiness require. How often is the providence of God employed for our highest good, without our co-operation! how often even against our best contrived and most strenuous endeavours! It is a delightful employment of the man of prayer who 'commits all his ways to the Lord,' to review from the different stages of his journey, the paths by which the Lord has mysteriously led him. How few of all does he discover to have been those of his previous choice! But the guardian providence and mercies of God extend to the unthankful and disobedient. Such indeed, walk in darkness, and understand little of the 'counsel of the most High.' But where is the rational creation of God on earth, though an athiest in his principles, and a profligate in his conduct, who is not compelled to admit, and to admire, in not a few of the events of his life, the marked interposition of a superior power? An adventurous scepticism may indeed do much,—and an habitual disuse of sober reflection, by sinking the intellectual into the sensual nature, still more, to exclude from a man's mind the conviction of a particular providence. Still, the doctrine has an advocate in his conscience, and

boldly as it is sometimes disclaimed, is never wholly disbelieved.

Mr. Bacon is now known to have been designed in the counsels of Providence, to exhibit to the world a short and luminous career of distinguished usefulness; and to leave to the christian church, in the effects of a signal example of holiness and zeal, a still more invaluable legacy. But, in his twentieth year, the utmost reach of human sagacity could discover little in his principles, or his circumstances, on which an opposite designation in almost every particular, might not with much greater probability, have been predicted. He indeed, uniformly exhibited a strong propensity for intellectual pursuits, and an uncommon facility of acquiring knowledge. But his highest ambition appears to have been to acquire, eventually, a peaceful settlement and comfortable subsistence in the humble sphere to which his intercourse, and nearly all his acquaintance with the world, was restricted. The hills which bounded his sight were to him as much the flammantia limina mundi, as Herschel's orbit to the accomplished astronomer: and the philosopher would nearly as soon lay the scene of his own life in the regions beyond, as young Bacon at the time, have meditated a pursuit which should draw him out of his rustic solitude. His friends attributing the effects of his contemplative disposition to indolence, judged him better suited to succeed in some trade; of which

several of the most serviceable kinds can always be exercised with advantage in an agricultural population. Mechanical occupations pursued even with diligence, are seldom so laborious as those of a New England farmer: and Samuel consented to be advised in this respect, rather from the desirable change which such a plan would make in his immediate situation, than from any settled predilection for the life of a mechanic. But his services had now become too valuable to his father, to be conveniently dispensed with—and some delay was incurred by the difficulty of determining on the business which should be at the same time, the most profitable, and best suited to the genius of the candidate. From these causes Bacon had attained his twentieth year before it was decided in what way he was to be disposed of. "But, at this time" he relates, "a person of imposing impudence and great loquacity came into the neighbourhood, who professed to be a physician. It happened to be a sickly season, and he was soon called into business. Very many people died, and the doctor's coffers were filling fast. This latter circumstance attracted my father's attention, and he thought his son might as well learn the trade too, as it proved so lucrative. The doctor indeed, was soon out of vogue. But while his high credit lasted the bargain was made by my father, and the plan communicated to me for my concurrence. Destitute as I was of learning, and even of a know-

ledge of what it imported, I still knew, and ventured to say, that my education was not sufficient for the business. My father thought more education useless. I was too sensible of my deficiency in this point to be convinced, and it was finally agreed I should go to live eight weeks, with the pastor of the Baptist church of Sturbridge, to learn English grammar. The charge for board and tuition was one dollar and twenty-five cents per week. This was thought too extravagant, and my father proceeded to Leicester academy, sixteen miles distant, to ascertain whether a cheaper accommodation could not be procured. He found that tuition there was one dollar per quarter, and board could be had for one dollar a week, so that in eight weeks, one dollar would be saved by sending me to that school. It was accordingly determined that I should go to Leicester."

It cannot be expected that his knowledge of letters was at this time, very extensive. "I was able," he states, "to read English, correctly, and could spell well the common terms of the language,—understood the simple rules of arithmetic, and could write as bad a hand, nearly, as at this time.* This was the extent of my learning. I knew nothing even of English grammar, and, as regards the stores of Latin, Greek, and other classical learning, I believe I knew not that there

* Mr. Bacon's penmanship was executed with great rapidity, and without much attention, often, either to elegance or legibility.

were such languages or literature in existence." This, it must be granted, is an uncommon specimen of ignorance in a youth nearly arrived at the age of manhood, in the enlightened and cultivated state of Massachusetts. It would be wholly incredible, if not viewed in connexion with the very unpropitious circumstances of young Bacon's situation during his minority. His capacity for acquiring knowledge was certainly of a superior order, and he could have remained in such ignorance, until that time of life only in consequence of an absolute destitution of the means of removing it.

In pursuance of the singular project which his father had formed in concert with the doctor, Samuel was conducted away to Leicester on the first of April, 1801, and entered in the English department of the grammar school in that town. Some idea of the economy observed in providing this course of instruction, has been afforded by the caution which his father had previously bestowed on that point. The same prudence was evinced in carrying the plan into effect. His father accompanied him on horseback, carrying provisions to subsist himself and the horses, until his return; saw him provided with two or three elementary books and a boarding place; paid the four shillings demanded for his tuition; and, on parting, impressed by a fresh repetition, some prudential maxims on the necessity of habitual economy. To enforce this les-

son by a practical comment, he presented his son with twenty-five cents, which he informed him, was to meet the incidental expenses of the term. Samuel had gained his main point, and easily overcame the chagrin occasioned by this very restricted allowance for purposes which he knew were of only secondary importance.

The grammar schools established in all the counties of this state, are commonly provided with too instructors; one of whom has the care of the classical, the other of the English department. Into the latter are admitted youths of both sexes. The course of instruction in the lower department, is understood to commence where that of the common schools, ends. A very good knowledge of the English language may here be acquired, together with geography and the most useful branches of mathematics.

In the classical department, the elements of the Latin and Greek languages are the principal objects of attention; and young men acquire the learning requisite for entrance in the colleges of that country. The funds which support these useful institutions are commonly the joint produce of public grants, and private munificence; the exercise of the last by the individuals most interested, being the usual condition on which the first are made. These funds are secured from alienation by an act of the legislature, and entrusted to the management of a board of trustees invested with corporate powers; and together

with a very moderate charge for tuition, paid by the pupils, amply defray the expenses of the school.

Bacon found himself, on being introduced to this little scene of literary activity, addressed by new objects of interest and ambition, to the influence of which he could not long remain insensible. Scarcely a remark of his seniors in study passed without notice, or failed to convey some new idea, and excite a new train of reflections. From hearing, he ventured to inquire; and besides his progress in the particular studies upon which he was put, which was very extraordinary, he acquired much information on other subjects, of which he was before utterly ignorant. His application was incessant. Even his nights were laid under large contributions. Three days served him to commit to memory the principles of English grammar, and his advancement in other studies was equally rapid. He had entered upon pursuits in which, for the first time, he felt conscious of a capacity to succeed. The field of literature enlarged on his view beyond his former conceptions on the subject—he was surrounded by a multitude of youths destined to explore its richer treasures; his ambition was fired; and he formed a determination, from which he never afterwards receded, to acquire an education of the most liberal kind. Even at this period, that native vein of benevolence which run through his character, and which piety afterwards devel-

oped with peculiar lustre, had a principal share in sustaining this almost romantic purpose. Without patronage, without money, he indeed, required the aid of his own sanguine temperament, and a very strong impression of the advantages connected with a good education, to engage him in the pursuit of one. Bacon's ambition was of an ardent cast; but, both in its objects and its nature, was through life, marked with an amiable regard to the rights and happiness of others. Depressed as his spirit had ever been by a load of cares, labours and troubles, quite disproportioned to his strength, such was the inherent ingenuousness of his nature that the hope of enlarging the sphere of his usefulness, more than the prospect of future distinction, at this time animated his singular resolution. And, "amidst my subsequent severest trials," he states, "I have said to myself a thousand times, let me press on to the completion of my object;—it is the way to usefulness; my capacity of doing good depends on my perseverance. The anticipation always imparted fresh vigour and cheerfulness to my zeal."

His first instructor at Leicester was Caleb Boutelle, Esq. His proficiency under this gentleman, in the brief term of eight weeks, was almost incredible. In June, he was recalled to the work of the farm, and remained thus employed until September. He had in the mean time, ventured to express to his father, his wishes in

relation to an education; but was forbidden, under penalty of his severe displeasure, to indulge so "wild and irrational an imagination." His purpose, which he forbore to express, was, however, unshaken. As a very special indulgence, permission was at length granted him to return to school, for another term of eight weeks. This indulgence was turned to the same good account as the preceding; and in the month of November of the same autumn, Bacon was qualified to take charge of the parish school, where he had himself received the rudiments of learning. He applied himself with great diligence and success to the duties of this new and honourable vocation, for the ensuing four months: and, at the expiration of his engagements, was gratified with very flattering commendations by his employers. His success served as a new incentive to perseverance in his studies. His father drew, and appropriated his wages; and finding that his son's learning was likely to prove a source of immediate emolument, was prevailed upon by painful intreaty, to consent to his spending another term of the same continuance as the two preceding, at the grammar school. Bacon, immediately on his return, begun Latin. The grammatical forms commonly learnt by beginners in that language, were committed to memory in five days. Before the expiration of the two months to which his stay at school was limited, he had entered upon the easy Latin poets.

While employed as the preceding summer, in the business of the farm, he completed his twenty-first year;—a point in life, to the attainment of which, he had long looked forward with impatient anxiety. Pitiable indeed is the lot of that son who can cherish without inexcusable impiety, so unnatural an anticipation. Most dangerous would be the doctrine that the excessive rigour of a parent, or imperfections which even a child is obliged to discover, can dissolve the natural and immutable obligation of filial obedience and submission; or make the restraints and demands of parental authority a grievance. The thought is alike abhorrent to religion, and reason. Few domestic dissentions ever leave the party sustaining the subordinate relation, the least culpable: the quiet and submissive attitude, which, in that case, it becomes the duty of that party to assume, would commonly disarm the asperity of the other. Seldom can the danger be on the side of conceding too much: and, admitting the individual holding the subordinate place to be the injured party, his obligation to pursue the most pacific course, is unimpaired by the circumstance. If redress is the object sought, a submissive deportment is surest to obtain it. But the dictates of reason in this duty, are sanctioned by the express maxims of religion. The father is accountable to his God, and not to his child: the child to God, under his father. The same principle extends

itself with the necessary modifications, through the other relations of domestic life,—a principle plainly recognised in the word of God, but which is less regarded even by christians of the present, than of former ages; and, with some others, of greater importance, is in danger of being even set aside, as the obsolete characteristic of a less enlightened period!

In the deportment of young Bacon under the very painful and perilous discipline to which his patience and his principles were subjected from this cause, there is more to approve and less to condemn, than many, possessing better advantages, and professing to be governed by sublimer motives, have exhibited in less trying circumstances. It deserves moreover, to be placed to his credit in the account, that parental tenderness and instruction had never fully established in his mind, the boundaries and land-marks of filial duty. He had little more than an instinctive impression on the subject, to guide him, until his own uninstructed good sense suggested a few additional principles, to which a certain correctness of feeling on moral subjects generally, disposed him to conform. Still, were his conduct weighed in an impartial balance, it would doubtless appear that he is not to be wholly excused from the blame of provoking or aggravating by some unfilial acts, the very treatment of which he complained.

From a state of indigence, his father had, at this time, risen to opulence. His farm had, by several purchases, become extensive and valuable, and a handsome amount of money, the earnings of a life of industry and thrift, been accumulated. After the labours of the season were completed, Samuel fully disclosed to him the purpose he had formed in relation to an education; and added such an explanation of his motives, as he hoped might secure his concurrence and aid. But he was wholly disappointed; and was required, either to renounce the design, or no longer to look to the paternal roof for a home. He did not hesitate to embrace the latter alternative; and until within a very few years of his death, experienced the full effect of the hard prohibition. This was in September, 1802. He immediately became an exile from the scene of his childhood; to which, he never afterwards returned permanently to reside.

He again repaired to Leicester, and devoted a few weeks more to his classical preparations for admission in Harvard college. The instructer in the Latin department, and the principal of the academy during his connexion with it, was Ebenezer Adams, A. M. a gentleman who has since held a very respectable professorship in Dartmouth college, and whom he never afterwards mentioned but with gratitude and veneration. The two following winters were spent in school-keeping in Rutland, a town twelve miles

from Leicester, and in the same county. A few weeks in each season were also spared to assist his father in securing the harvest. The proceeds of his labour in both occupations went to defray the expenses of his residence at the academy. By this alternation of study and toil, he qualified himself, and applied for admission as a member of the freshman class in Harvard college, in the autumn of 1804. He was received on a footing of equality with the other members of the class. But the great increase in expense in his new situation, was a source of distressing embarrassment, for which it was necessary to make immediate provision. The practice of the most rigid economy was from his early habits, no self-denial. He had travelled on foot with his bundle, from his native town to Cambridge; and had restricted his personal wants almost to the simple demands of nature. But below this point, it was in vain to think of reducing them. A comparatively expensive and constant residence at the first literary institution on the continent, for four years, the short winter vacations alone excepted, was to be provided for, or his long cherished intention, and the prospect to which it opened be absolutely abandoned. He acknowledges himself especially indebted to the kindness of Moses White, Esq. of Rutland, "whose friendship," he says, "he experienced in many times of difficulty in prosecuting his studies." But the nature and extent of this obligation

is not precisely explained. This gentleman appears to have been his only efficient patron in this interesting struggle for intellectual advancement. To him he had only been known in the character of a laborious and faithful instructor; and probably his obscurity more than his want of merit, had restricted him to the friendship of a single individual, from whom any important assistance or encouragement could be obtained.

Soon after his entrance in college, the pressure of his poverty overcame the reluctance of pride, and he applied for the birth of "Holden Freshman," which is a partially endowed scholarship in the university. The services which the incumbent is expected to render as the condition of enjoying its privileges, are equally laborious and humiliating. His business is to ring the bell for all the exercises of college,—a duty which recurs more than twelve times in the day; and to kindle and attend all the fires in the different recitation rooms. He is uniformly occupied in these attentions, while the students are at table; and all the perquisite connected with the place, is the scanty pittance which happens to escape the voracity of the hungry multitude.

Having secured this situation, the reflection that it was the only condition on which he could enjoy the advantages of a public education, reconciled him to its servile duties. His uniform good sense, and a prospective view of consequences, commonly prevailed over the sugges-

tions of pride and the pressure of present inconveniences, in most of the engagements of his life. In the cheerful attention which he gave to his humble duties, in the presence of several hundreds of his equals, and for their accommodation, this trait of his character shone with a very amiable lustre. This service it must, however, be understood, does not necessarily prove detrimental to the progress of the individual who performs it. It often invigorates his health, by the exercise which it affords; and occupies no greater proportion of his time, than he ought to devote to some form of relaxation from the severer pursuits of his class. It has not seldom happened that the scholar most distinguished in his class for his accuracy in mathematics and philosophy, is the Holden Freshman. The classics are best relished, and best understood by a mind which unites a proper proportion of vigour with those free and easy sallies of imagination and feeling to which no habit contributes more, than the cultivated intercourse of polite society. An almost mechanical round of study and recreation, if persisted in, may make a man of science,—but can hardly conduct to mediocrity in the more liberal arts. A gradual refinement of the taste which depends chiefly on its exercise, is always the measure of the student's progress in these branches of learning. In this article of a liberal education, Mr. Bacon ever discovered a deficiency, which, is certainly to be

attributed to the late period at which he engaged in its acquisition, and the unfavourable circumstances which attended the prosecution of it, rather than to any constitutional defect in the qualities of his mind.

The colleges of New England, considered as the perfecting feature of the excellent system of popular instruction which obtains there, have ever been its boast, and one of its brightest ornaments. Harvard College is the oldest institution of this kind, not only in that country, but in America. It was founded, and an appropriation of four hundred pounds made to it, by the general court, in 1636, sixteen years after the arrival of the first colonists in New England, and only six years subsequently to the first settlement of the province of Massachusetts bay. At that period, not only the surrounding country, but almost the very site of the college, was an uncultivated wilderness. The "governor, deputy governor and magistrates" of the province, were constituted its original guardians, together with the "president for the time being, and the ministers of the congregational churches in the towns of Cambridge, Watertown, Charlestown, Boston, Roxbury and Dorchester." The only change in the overseers of the institution which took place at the Revolution, consisted in the substitution of the "lieutenant governor, council and senate of the commonwealth" for the time being, in the place of the "deputy governor and

magistrates." By a still later change, the clerical and lay members of this board have been increased to fifteen of each order, with the power of filling vacancies in their own body. The direct application and management of the funds, together with the appointment of professors, and establishment of the standing laws of the institution, is committed to a corporate body, consisting of seven persons, who are styled the "President and Fellows of Harvard College." The acts of this body are generally subject to the supervision of the overseers. The immediate government and instruction of the college are administered by the president, professors, tutors, librarian and five proctors.

The institution went into operation in 1638, two years before its proper organization took place. The original intention of the establishment was chiefly to educate young men for the church, in order to perpetuate in the new world, a learned and able ministry. The most liberal of its early benefactors was the Rev. John Harvard, who died in Charlestown in 1638, leaving to it one half of his estate, amounting to seven hundred and seventy-nine pounds seventeen shillings and two pence sterling. To perpetuate the memory of his munificent bequest, the name of this benefactor was given to the institution.

Its early presidents and professors were, with few exceptions, educated in England, and appear to have been eminently learned, pious and able

men. The grants, donations and bequests subsequently added to the original foundation, by the state, and by individuals in England and America, have been numerous and valuable: and it continues to receive an annual appropriation of ten thousand dollars from the treasury of the commonwealth. The edifices belonging to the college are ten in number, besides the president's dwelling, and the medical hall in Boston; and the property subject to the disposal of the corporation for the use of the institution, amounts to six hundred thousand dollars.

On this very respectable foundation, are professorships in divinity, mathematics, natural and experimental philosophy, in Hebrew and the other oriental languages, in rhetoric and the belles letters, in metaphysics and ethics, in logic, natural history, the ancient and modern languages, in moral philosophy and civil polity, and the application of the sciences to the useful arts. It has likewise a lecturer on sacred criticism and ecclesiastical history and polity. Several of these professorships have been endowed by the munificence of individuals. On most of the branches enumerated, the students have not only the advantage of hearing lectures, but are arraigned in regular recitations, under faithful instructers. The other features of the system of instruction common to all the colleges of New England, and which have given them a material advantage, in point of usefulness over most of the similar

institutions in the southern states, consist in the exact classification of the students, the regular and uniform succession of their studies, the exclusion of resident undergraduates not regularly entered in the classes, and the definite period prescribed for the completion of the whole course.

The exactness of the discipline, and the incessant diligence necessary to be observed by the students, in order to accomplish the established course of studies, tend to the same results. The best education which our country can afford may be accomplished at this college.

For admission into the lowest class specific qualifications are prescribed, comprehending a good elementary knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, and the mathematics. Four years' residence is necessary to complete the course. This term is perhaps as advantageously employed by American youths in the earlier stages of an education, as the same period could be done in any other institution in the world. The seminary may justly be considered as better adapted to the age and circumstances of this country, than even the celebrated universities of Europe. While it has educated a large number of useful men, it has likewise formed to habits of study, and imparted a taste for knowledge, to many individuals who have afterwards become accomplished scholars, and shone with distinguished lustre in the different departments of life. The average number of undergraduates has, for the last ten

years, not much varied from two hundred and fifty. Of fifteen presidents, who have in succession, been at the head of this institution, ten were clergymen, and all of the congregational denomination. The religious character of the Seminary has always been nearly identified with that of the community to which it belongs. Both were formerly strictly calvinistic. But during the last thirty years a change, almost imperceptible at first, and gradual in its progress, has been taking place in the principles of the people of that part of Massachusetts, from which its overseers, and professors are principally chosen; and, as the necessary consequence, in the religious character of the college. A most portentous laxity of opinions in religion, tending to loosen its hold on the affections and the conscience, and depress the christian faith towards the degraded level of a mere human system, has succeeded to the exact definitions and unbending orthodoxy of the puretanical school. In the theological appendage to the institution, erected on a distinct foundation about five years ago, graduates from all the colleges are admitted, and the indigent assisted by a charitable fund created for the purpose. The professors in this department are understood to be anti-trinitarian in their principles, and the course of instruction so adjusted, as to produce on the minds of the pupils an impression decidedly favourable to the same opinions. The design of directly influencing the stu-

dents in the formation of their theological theories, is however disclaimed: and the method of instruction ostensibly pursued is, to lay open the different religious systems, and explain the grounds on which they are severally held, and thus to direct the judgment to the adoption of the most natural and consistent. Admitting that this intention is honestly acted upon, it requires but a slight observation of the grounds on which young men take up their opinions on most subjects, especially in religion, to predict the uniform result of this novel experiment. It supposes that all who enter the course, have their theological sentiments yet to form. And, from what influence is it conceivable that such minds will here receive their first and strongest bias? Evidently from the authority of their instructers; although no such motive should be openly applied. And every lesson in the course must, of consequence be suited, to produce more or less directly, an exact agreement in their general opinions, with those of their teachers. The authority which the latter must thus exercise over their minds, is naturally increased by the flattering appeal which the avowed system of instruction, pursued, makes to their youthful vanity, by referring to their premature and uninformed judgments, the decision of questions in theology on which they admit that nearly the whole christian church has been in error for nearly two thousand years! As the advocates

of this new and perilous theology have adopted no written confession of faith, it is difficult exactly to define their theological tenets, and very questionable whether they generally agree in the adoption of any particular system. They perhaps may be better characterised as entirely dissenting from the faith generally held by the different denominations of protestant christians, as orthodox, than as advancing any consistent scheme of their own. Their most distinguished writers deny the doctrines of the trinity in unity of the ever blessed God,—the supreme divinity of our Saviour, and the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost. They generally agree, likewise, in rejecting the plenary inspiration of the Holy scriptures, the doctrine of the atonement, the original corruption of human nature, the necessity of a radical change of the heart as a qualification for future happiness, the eternity of future punishment, and the direct influences of the divine Spirit on the minds of believers.

The contrast which this enumeration of rejected doctrines will present to the mind acquainted with the faith of the founders and primitive patrons of Harvard College, and that knows how to calculate the different effects of truth and error, cannot fail to awake the most poignant reflections. May it impress a salutary lesson on those who are charged with providing for the future interests of any particular branch of the christian church!

The actual principles of a majority of the instructers, corporation, and overseers of the college, were not at the period of Bacon's connexion with it, so fully disclosed nor so generally known, as at the present time. The discussion of religious subjects then formed a very small part of the business of any of the professors, and was almost wholly confined to a small private society of the students. The time of Mr. Bacon was too much engrossed by literary pursuits, to suffer his thoughts to be much occupied by any other subjects; and he appears to have passed the whole of this interesting period of his life, without any serious impressions in relation to his spiritual interests. From the low state of piety in the immediate circle to which his youth was confined, the want of competent and systematic instruction in religion at that time, and from an allowed and long continued neglect of the scriptures, he had for several years cherished a doubt as to the divine origin of the christian system. Being insensible of the natural repugnance of the human mind to the truths of divine revelation, the absence of substantiatory evidence formed the only motive for its rejection, of which he was then conscious. He was even desirous for a time, to obtain such proofs of the truth of christianity, as should confirm his belief of it. But he seldom resorted to the scriptures themselves, for this evidence; and, it is believed, rested rather in the speculations of his own

thoughts, than weighed the evidences, stated in any approved defence of revealed religion. The most criminal indifference to so weighty an interest, constantly prevailed during the whole progress of his mind, from a state of simple incertitude, to confirmed scepticism. Infidelity is, in the scriptures, condemned as a sin. And the justice of the denunciation of so terrible a penalty as everlasting death, against this in common with every other species of unbelief, is manifest from the fact, that the sceptic is always chargeable either with such vices as make it his interest that the Bible should not be true; or with the neglect of prayer to God for instruction, and of that diligent examination of the evidences of religion, which the awful magnitude of the concern demands of him. In all this part of his conduct, he sins against the dictates of religion, and his own natural impressions of duty; and, if on no other grounds, is liable, on these alone, to the just judgment of Heaven against all who disbelieve the gospel.

Mr. Bacon ever showed a peculiarly affectionate and interested regard for children. His most delightful occupation was that of instructing, and training them for future usefulness, respectability and happiness. The arduous service of instructing school in the recess of college duties, imposed by the slenderness of his finances, was from this constitutional trait, materially mitigated. He appears, to have engaged

in it with pleasure, alloyed only by the consideration of its being an impediment to the advancement of his literary pursuits. And he ever gained a point of no slight importance to a young man struggling into literary notice in that country, by uniformly finishing his winter's engagement in this business, with the general, and high approbation of his employers. The diligence and skill with which he conducted the business of instruction, were no more apparent in the progress of his pupils, than the kindness and benevolence of his deportment, in their strong attachment to his person. This latter circumstance could not fail of securing the friendship of the parents, and endearing his name in the grateful rememberance of many who have succeeded him on the stage of active life.

By the proceeds of school-keeping in the winter, and the more ungrateful services attached to his "Holden Freshman" privilege, he defrayed the expenses of his first year in college. At the commencement of the second, he applied for another servitorship, to which a similar privilege, with a less laborious duty, was attached. This consisted in waiting on the common table of the college,—a duty which he as cheerfully performed, as he availed himself of the petty privilege of serving himself afterwards with the mutilated fragments to which it entitled him.

During the third year he retained the same college "privilege," and continued to perform

the same humiliating duties. The winter of this and the following year was spent in Sudbury, Middlesex county, in his accustomed employment of school-keeping. His labours, privations and confinement, brought on, in 1806, a decline of health, which now threatened to interrupt his literary pursuits, entirely, and even in a short time, to bring him to his grave. His complaints were of a complicated character, and some of the symptoms alarming. His studies were still continued; nor was he in a situation to dispense with the trifling stipend to which his attentions as college waiter, entitled him. Indeed, during the whole of this year he neither relaxed in his studies, nor abated any of his accustomed labours.

In the last year of his membership, yielding to the force of necessity, he again accomplished, with great injury to his health, and almost incredible sufferings, his customary term of school-keeping. But the effort was two much. He returned in March to Cambridge, resumed his studies, and imprudently continued his residence there until May. It was in vain longer to struggle against his increasing and extreme debility, attended with some of the most alarming symptoms of a pulmonary consumption. He tore himself away from the scene of literary enchantment; and was enabled by the seasonable aid of some generous benefactor, to indulge himself for a few weeks, in several short excursions into the interior of New England. The change of objects, society, and

air, and especially the release from the confinement and studies of college, thus obtained, produced a trifling abatement of the most dangerous symptoms of his complaint; and he revisited Cambridge in June, to attend the customary examination of the candidates for the first degree. This examination is conducted in the presence of the corporation, and overseers of the college. He appears to have passed it with reputation. His studies were however, not at present to be resumed. He accordingly spent the remainder of the summer and a part of the ensuing autumn, either in travelling, or in the society of his friends. The commencement in September, when his class-mates received their degrees, he was not able from his illness, to attend; and continued several months, in a state of almost hopeless debility. He was entirely sensible of the dangerous character of the disorder, and of its almost certain termination in his dissolution. For several months he expected the event with confidence; but appears to have contemplated it with composure, and even indifference. The tremendous prospect scarcely extorted a single cry for mercy, or excited a thought for the fate of his soul. This alarming destitution of feeling in an accountable and rational being, can easier be accounted for, than vindicated. His life had been uniformly, and in an uncommon degree, upright, admitting the correctness of the standard of duty which he had adopted.

He cheerfully recognised his obligations towards his fellow creatures, as far as their present convenience was concerned; and it was his pleasure to fulfil them; but this was the limit of his benevolence, and of his most extended notion even of religious duty. His vast obligations to God, and the Saviour,—obligations enforced by all the goodness concerned in his creation, and preservation, and all the grace displayed in his redemption, and which are comprehended in the summary injunctions of both departments of revelation, 'to love the Lord, with all the soul, the mind, and the strength,'—these obligations, even in the confident anticipation of an early call into the presence of his Creator, were wholly unfelt. Let it be recollected that Mr. Bacon at no period of his life, certainly not at the one now under review, was accustomed to restrain his reflections on other subjects, however grave and serious. On topics of this kind, from the natural sobriety of his character, and contemplative turn of his mind, his thoughts more readily dwelt than on any other. But they were seldom intently directed to the concerns of his soul; and never, at this period, were excited to a state of anxiety or even of lively and interested inquiry, in respect of the future state of his soul. His case is a common one. Death, to the prosperous man of the world, is usually little more than the idea of his ceasing to enjoy the pleasures of life: to the tender husband or parent, its most appalling

idea is that of his widowed and orphan family; to the rich, it is formidable as involving a new disposition, or the dissipation of his estate; to the scholar, as the termination of his studies; but to the languid and suffering victim of a slow decay, it often presents itself as opening an obscure and gloomy, but not unfriendly asylum, from the ravages of disease and pain. There is indeed, an apparent variety in the views with which these different characters regard the awful close of their mortal existence. But suppose them uninfluenced by christian principles, and they agree in more respects than they differ. Death itself, and its consequences, as they affect the soul, are regarded as little more than a final sleep, of no importance except as it alters their relation to the things of the present life. The convincing power of the divine Spirit, by discovering to the mind the purity and extent of the law of God, by impressing on the heart a sense of his holiness and justice, and arousing the conscience from its sleep, and false hope from its dreams of bliss, can introduce a new and awakening train of reflections in the breast not of the dying only, but of the living. Such a man can neither live nor die, without awful forebodings, and intolerable anguish of spirit, till he has some assurance that his condemnation is reversed, and his peace established in Heaven. Mr. Bacon was not so convinced, and saw the probable approach of the closing scene of his life without

emotion. But his God was merciful. He had in reserve for him, blessings of which he had never even conceived the value. Towards the close of autumn the most formidable of his symptoms disappeared. His returning health was immediately laid under contribution, and even forestalled in his eagerness to enter on a course of professional study. His aim had from the first, been elevated, and he was governed in his choice of a pursuit in life, by the design of securing the greatest possible measure of influence. His successful exertions for the improvement of his mind encouraged him to engage in the study of a science in which an inferior genius must sink, and mere mediocrity of talents can never excel.

He begun his course of law reading under J. B. Caldwell, Esq. of Rutland, a few miles only from the residence of his father. His interruptions were frequent, and his progress for want of health, he considered very slow. From reasons which do not appear, he, in a few weeks, changed this situation for another in the same town, in the office of W. C. White, Esq. His progress under this gentleman, as appears from a certificate to which his signature is affixed, was highly creditable to his industry and his talents.

In July, 1809, he seems to have regained a comparatively comfortable state of health. Induced by the hope of contributing by his pen towards defraying his current personal expenses,

an object of which his circumstances never suffered him to lose sight, he removed to the town of Worcester, and undertook the management of the National Ægis, a respectable weekly news-paper of many years' standing. Here he continued to pursue the course of law reading on which he had entered, with his accustomed diligence, under the direction of Levi Lincoln, jr. Esq. at that time the lieutenant governor of the state. He was thus occupied until the ensuing winter. Meantime his unremitting application to the multiplied duties of his new situation, alone, seemed to prevent him from recovering entirely from the wound which he had inflicted by the same weapon, on an excellent constitution. In December following, he found himself still a valetudinarian. To a system disordered as his was, and exhibiting a strong tendency to pectoral inflammation, and hæmorrhage, the severe effects of a northern winter, in order to be known, must be felt. A student subject to those painful symptoms must possess more than common, indeed more than youthful fortitude, who will suffer any consideration of the superior advantages of a northern situation for acquiring professional qualifications, to dissuade him from an immediate removal to a softer climate. Mr. Bacon was now much at his ease, excepting the single article of health. His talents and industry had begun to commend him to the notice, and favourable opinion of a constantly widening circle of respecta-

ble individuals, on whose future patronage and friendship he might venture to calculate in his future advancement. He was by no means insensible to these persuasive motives for remaining in Massachusetts. But an infirm habit of body, and its depressing effects on the mind, were evils for the removal or mitigation of which he was willing to forego all these advantages; and accordingly yielded to the solicitations of an acquaintance, residing in Philadelphia, and then on a visit to Massachusetts, to accompany him on his return to Pennsylvania.

His editorial career was too short, and the scene of it too circumscribed during his residence in Worcester, to admit a fair display of his talents in that department of literary labour. From the general character of the articles from his pen, an opinion is to be formed rather favourable to his future promise, than to his actual achievements, in that capacity. His productions evince some originality of thought, and considerable fertility of invention. They are pointed and animated. But his ardour rises sometimes to intemperance of feeling; and his conceptions need chastening. He wrote with rapidity, and was very impatient of the labour of revising and correcting his composition. His principles on political and other related subjects, had been adopted with sincerity, and were avowed with candour: and he appears to have been ever ready to enter with interest into any designs

having a benevolent aspect towards individuals or the community. His taste for general and polite literature, is apparent in the insertion not only of a large number of selected articles of this character, but of several of his own. Among the latter are several poetical scraps.

CHAP. III.

The recovery of his health was Mr. Bacon's chief inducement to visit Pennsylvania. He left the exact line of his future course to be marked out by subsequent events. The flattering representations given by the individual who induced him to remove, of the advantages to be reaped from instructing a school in the city or vicinity of Philadelphia, in connexion with his own strong predilection for that business, had determined him on the measure. What was the nature of those representations is not stated in his notes; but on his arrival in Philadelphia, he appears not to have realised his anticipations; and was not quite satisfied with the conduct of his too officious patron. He indeed derived from him little assistance which an entire stranger could not as well have afforded him.

In this country, nothing can be more fallacious than the hopes excited in young men by the promises of patronage. In whatever department of life the proffered interest is to be exerted in their favour, the probable result is the same. The very constitution of our society renders the expectation of rising under individual patronage most precarious. No individual is secure for a day of being able to retain the influence over any portion of the community,

which he believes himself to possess. He may, at any time, be required to struggle,—and struggle in vain, perhaps, with the popular current, to maintain his own interest. The connexion from which a young man may have expected important benefits, so far from assisting, may thus come to prove the greatest detriment to his advancement. These remarks will be seen to have a special application to the profession of the law. But they must be true as general maxims, so long as society is young in America, and probably as long as the republican principle remains unchanged in the government, and so largely pervades all the inferior departments of the community. Success in no honourable pursuit can reasonably be anticipated on any other condition than that of the blessing of God, upon diligent, persevering, and upright industry.

Mr. Bacon found himself on arriving in Philadelphia in December, 1809, in a very unpleasant predicament. His small provision of cash was nearly out; no opportunity of obtaining a school in that city presented itself: with the exception of the individual already named, he was in the midst of entire strangers : of his recommendations addressed to individuals he seems never to have made much use : his health was still infirm, and his spirits liable to extreme depression; and, as the greatest calamity of all, he was a stranger to the consolations and resources

of religion. A cheerless infidelity had usurped in his mind the place of a resigned confidence in the guardianship of Heaven; and converted any just impressions of the doctrine of a particular providence and the universality of the divine presence and agency, that might remain, into a source of dread, rather than of relief. But religion at this time afforded him about as little annoyance as peace. It was not the subject which occupied his attention. But even at this period, when a strong impulse of natural affection was raised in his breast, his thoughts would immediately recur to the topics of consolation and hope, suggested by christianity. According to these would be all the expressions of his feelings, and the benedictions which they would prompt him to invoke upon the objects of his solicitude and love. A singular inconsistency! which, however, proves that even the constitutional qualities of a sceptical mind, in order to be amiable, are obliged to appear to symbolize with the evangelical system.

After a short stay in Philadelphia, he proceeded on foot, and alone, into the interior of Pennsylvania, in search of a school. The winter had commenced, and on his arrival at Lancaster, his strength was quite exhausted. Being unsuccessful in his application for a situation here, he proceeded on the last day of December, to York, which he had been induced to visit by the prospect of obtaining the situation of classical

teacher in a seminary of that place, having the name of "York College." This place he knew to be vacant; and during his stay at Lancaster, had disposed his recommendations in such a form as to give him, he thought, a fair chance of succeeding in his application for it. Soon after his arrival, the trustees of the seminary were convened to consider his claims to the appointment; and after organising the session in due form, "I was ushered," he states, "into the room, and was thus addressed by their Rev. President: 'Sir, we have no doubt but you have a good education: the people of your country generally have; but we wish to know how you can write.' I directly turned on my heel with a flush of indignation, saying to the gentlemen as I retired, that it was no part of my object in presenting myself there, to be examined in penmanship, or spelling." On further inquiry he learnt that this college was then on the footing of the common schools, and that the situation for which he had applied, was little more than that of an abecedarian professorship. Without the means of travelling in the public stage, and too independent to be obliged to the generosity of strangers, he soon after left York, on foot, for Carlisle. The roads were bad, and the weather severe. He arrived in four days; and experienced the same ill success in the object of his search, which had uniformly befallen him on this unpleasant excursion. Proceeding from Carlisle

to Shippensburg, he here found himself utterly exhausted, and seriously ill. He threw himself into the stage, immediately, and returned back to Lancaster, as he then thought with all the comfortless indifference of infidelity, "to die."

His circumstances, and the brooding melancholy of his temper, at this time, favoured the progress of disease in his system. But he was mercifully saved from the grave; and in a few weeks sufficiently recovered to renew his inquiries for a school. He availed himself of the recommendations with which he was furnished, and used the influence of all the friends which they procured him, and at length opened a school, in Lancaster, beginning with five scholars. Singular as the fact may be viewed, a few years hence, he encountered very formidable opposition in the pursuit of this humble object, and from gentlemen of the first respectability, *on account of his supposed political principles.* Such was the strength of party feeling at this time in Pennsylvania. It had imparted a taint to the most upright and dignified minds, and with the virulence of a social pestilence, even infested the commerce of humble life. A few partisans alone, understood the true cause of the popular agitation. The loudest in the clamour could commonly give no rational account of the abstract principles which they so boisterously espoused, or of the motives of their own conduct. The same characteristic may be ap-

plied to almost every scene of violent political commotion in the nation. The existence of parties, and a high excitement of party zeal appear to be evils inseparable in the present state of human nature, from the form of government to which, under Heaven, we are indebted for so many public and social blessings.

In the useful but arduous sphere of labour into which Mr. Bacon had now entered, he remained until April, 1812. His scholars multiplied in this period, to an hundred and fifty: nor, if his talents, his education, his predilection for the business of instruction, and the ardour with which he prosecuted it, are considered, will this increase be otherwise regarded than as their natural consequence. The pleasure resulting from perceiving the success of his exertions, and from promoting on a broad scale, the improvement of the young, was the chief motive which prompted to these extraordinary, and disinterested labours. Not only were the proceeds of his school wholly expended on itself, but a debt of several hundred dollars annually contracted by its indefatigable principal for perfecting his system of instruction. He had in the same period, without any improper interference, united under his immediate superintendence, nearly all the different schools in the place. A library of five hundred volumes was purchased for their use; the standard of education considerably raised, and the most efficient, and an uni-

form mode of instruction pursued in them all. Mr. Bacon had the pleasure of perceiving the unreasonable opposition experienced in the outset, from several gentlemen of great influence, gradually, and entirely disappear, and but one sentiment of approbation and satisfaction prevail among all classes of his employers.

The trait which shone so advantageously in Mr. Bacon while occupied in these arduous labours, is fully illustrated, and some important maxims relative to the government of youth very happily conveyed, in a manuscript, dated in the camp, some years subsequently to the period under review. It appears to be the copy of a letter addressed to some person who had succeeded him in one of his schools, and applied for advice in relation to the system of discipline which Mr. Bacon had adopted with so much success. The appositeness of the remarks will excuse the anachronism of their introduction in this place.

"Yours of the 8th instant needs no apology." "When you speak of *my children*, you touch a chord, which, like the harp of Memnon, needs but a breath, to make the vibrations long and deep." "My long intercourse with youth, and a long and habitual reciprocation of the relative duties, cares and pleasures, of teacher and pupil, have wrought a sort of second nature in me; so much so, that the very term, 'youth,' is sacred, consecrated to innocence and purity." "For

these reasons you may be sure it must have been one amongst the many painful events of my life to leave my children of * * * * especially as that also may be considered the final period of my school-keeping. But, sir, you will allow me to say, that I think the difficulties, of which you complain, are rather imaginary than real. The same avenues, through which I approached, or perhaps, gained possession of their hearts, are still open for your access.—To every teacher, when he first enters on his duties, the very *nature* of youth seems to address itself, in the inimitable language of the Highland Bard,

"O come you in *peace* here, or come you in *war*?"

If he enter his little dominion with all the terrible insignia of pedagogical domination displayed, he must gain his ground by inches. But if he 'come in peace,' if he come like a good angel, seeking after objects, on which to exercise his mercy, and pour forth the expressions of his good will, the youth of his care will throw themselves into his arms, and give up to him their hearts, and even that wonderful faculty, the unyielding *will*. In plain phrase, if he love them, they will love him. Go on. Appear to be, and really be, anxious for their good; labour for this object in word and in deed; and rely on it, sir, they must be affected by it; and while the principles of human nature remain unchanged, they will love you in return."

It can hardly be necessary to state, that during this period, his professional studies were almost quite suspended. It was no part of his character to be capable of moderating the pursuit of his main object, so as to leave him much leisure for attending to any other. His inquiries on religion seem to have been nearly discontinued; its ordinances either seldom frequented, or indifferently attended; and the dominion of sin acquiring the most complete ascendancy over all the powers of his mind.

His deportment was, however, strictly correct; and although he suffered his own mind indolently to acquiesce in a vague system of deism, he seldom or never used either argument or persuasion with others, in order to induce any change of their religious principles. Severely sarcastical occasionally, in his reprehension of the excrescences which had in different forms, grown out of the morbid state of particular branches of the christian community, his conviction, if not of the sacredness, yet of the utility of the moral principles of christianity itself, effectually restrained him from openly assailing the system; or, as far as appears, of wishing for its general rejection. He even enforced those precepts constantly on the minds of the youths under his care. Although his candour at a subsequent period, brought him to a confession of having entertained all the negative characteristics of infidelity; it is but too safe a presumption

that thousands who pass themselves for the friends of the christian religion, are inwardly infected with an equal degree of the same torpid infidelity. To many of his intimate associates at this time, the lurking poison of his doubts and disbelief in relation to our holy religion, was undiscovered.

In the summer of 1810, his spirits were reduced to the lowest state of depression, in consequence of bodily indisposition, and the pressure of incessant and increasing cares, and a full conviction of the vanity of worldly expectations; to all which may be added the constant annoyance of a burdened conscience. The unhappiness experienced from this latter cause, was felt, but not understood. He found himself wretched in the extreme, and existence itself an intolerable burden. He knew of no remedy: and at one period fully resolved on hazarding the awful experiment of suicide. But the hand of God arrested him, and prevented the execution of his purpose.

From May to December, of the same year, he edited a small weekly paper, denominated the "Hive," which had some years previously, been published in the same place; and which, with considerable exertion, he revived, to experience in a few months, a similar doom, for want of patronage. Its character was miscellaneous, and the editorial articles relate chiefly to subjects

which his own pursuits and studies had rendered familiar to his thoughts.

Of this publication, Mr. Bacon remarks, "It never obtained a very extensive patronage, perhaps did not deserve it." Its pages exhibited not so properly a variety, as a medley of articles; of which, far the largest proportion were inserted rather for the amusement than edification of their readers. Nearly one half of these were fugitive pieces from Mr. Bacon's own pen. They are indeed neither marked with chasteness of style, nor evince much refinement of taste in their author; but they bear ample testimony to his industry, the fertility of his invention, and the captivating vivacity of his imagination. The journal contains several poetical productions accompanied with copious notes; which discover a more than ordinary talent for this species of composition, and an extensive but not very accurate acquaintance with ancient and modern classical literature. His pieces, with scarcely an exception, were despatched to press in an unfinished state, both in regard to the treatment of their subjects, and the character of their phraseology; and show rather what the writer might have accomplished in this species of authorship, with sufficient leisure and care, than actually lay the foundation for any lasting literary reputation. Mr. Bacon's productions are distinguished from those of all the occasional contributors to his miscellany, by their ori-

ginality, and a certain redundancy of broken classical imagery: but the most correct, perhaps the ablest pieces, were from the pens of some of his correspondents.*

Mr. Bacon's labours in Lancaster were neither appreciated nor rewarded as they deserved to be. But as he had enjoyed signal success, and could contemplate his exertions with a high degree of satisfaction, he was too well pleased with the situation to seek for any other. In March, 1812, he unexpectedly received a polite and urgent invitation from the trustees of the school already mentioned under the name of York College, to remove, and take charge of that Institution. This call, he soon resolved to accept, on the condition of receiving a sufficient advance of money from the trustees, to pay off the debts incurred on account of his schools in Lancaster. The condition was complied with on the part of the trustees, without hesitation, and he accordingly resigned his charge, and repaired to York, on the first of April.

By the suggestion of a young officer of Marines, at that time stationed at Lancaster, he had several months previously, sent in to the Executive an application for a commission in the same corps. Of the success of this application he never entertained but little expectation; and at the time of making his engagement with the

* See Appendix, Note IV.

trustees of the York academy, the circumstance of the application scarcely occurred to his thoughts. But when on the point of departing to fulfil his engagement at York, he was surprised with the arrival of a commission. The appointment was to a second lieutenancy in the marine corps. Having written to the commanding officer of the corps, an account of his situation, he proceeded directly to York, and undertook the charge to which he had engaged himself; and in a few days after, received from Washington a furlough for six months. His devotion to the interests of the school during this period, was entire; and his success equal to that which had distinguished his former labours. On the expiration of his furlough, in October, he repaired to Washington, and joined his corps. The enthusiasm of his character was adapted to a military life; and a quick and operative sense of honour, by which his feelings were uniformly distinguished, was likely to ensure a faithful and prompt discharge even of the most laborious and perilous services. He shortly acquired a good practical knowledge of the military art, as far as the duties of his station required; and was eager for a more active participation in the labours and hazards of war than the appointment of the service seemed likely soon to allot to him.

In March, 1813, he was ordered, by his own request, from Washington to New York, to take charge of the guard of the Argus Sloop of war,

then lying in that harbour. By some oversight the same command had been previously given to an officer of inferior rank; and he remained in quarters, at New York, until the ensuing August. He was now recalled to Washington, and on the first of September, received the appointment of quarter-master of the corps, which he accepted. In this capacity he continued to serve eighteen months, when he resigned the appointment, and was reinstated in the rank to which the regular course of promotion entitled him.

Destitute of that inward fear of God, and that principle of obedience to his authority, which alone can render the soul superior to the tyrannical laws of a perverted and spurious honour; and a stranger to the power of divine grace in restraining the inordinate dominion of the passions, he was easily seduced by pride and resentment, to engage in a duel with an officer of the same corps, on the pretext of terminating some trivial disagreement. His antagonist in this rash and criminal enterprise, had formerly been one of his most intimate and confidential friends, to whom he had once regarded himself as under very particular obligations! Which of the parties was the aggressor and deserved the severest reprehension, in the quarrel which led to this affair, it is no part of the writer's object, and cannot be that of the christian reader, to inquire. Suffice it to say, that Mr. Bacon lived to express the deepest abhorrence of the unnatural act, and to

regard the individual who participated with him in the sin and the peril of it, with a feeling of affection and respect, which all the blood that has ever flowed in voluntary assassinations could never inspire. The wretchedness of a common apostacy, and the blood of an universal atonement, to the faith of a christian, cannot fail to present such considerations as must bind him with the tie of essential brotherhood to every individual of his species. On the basis of this sublime view of the mutual relations of men, was Mr. Bacon's benevolence for all his fellow-men, eventually established. Under the influence of this spirit, suppose him to receive an injury which should directly affect his character. Still, it must be a brother who inflicted it; and whom, because he *was his brother*, it would be impossible for him to injure in return. Mr. Bacon's subsequent detestation of the practice of duelling was likewise founded on the knowledge which faith had revealed to him of the strictness and purity of God's holy laws, and the 'exceeding sinfulness of sin.' In an interview which the writer enjoyed with him a very few months before his death, the subject of duelling, with special reference to his own case, was casually adverted to in the conversation. He remarked, very seriously, that "duelling is unquestionably murderous: but, do not let us suppose duellists and assassins are the only murderers. Where is the man that is not, in the sight of God, chargeable

with all that is essential to that and every other abomination which can be named? In his judgment, we are all by nature much nearer a level than we are apt to suppose." The enlightened christian will be able to appreciate the real humility of these sentiments. The feeling which prompted them was an abhorrence of all iniquity too absolute to admit of his restricting the condemnation of it to any particular act of his own, or any one species of sins in general. In the affair alluded to, he received a severe wound in the thigh, which disabled him from active duty for several weeks.

On the last day of May, 1814, he married Miss Anna Mary, the daughter of Jacob Barnitz, Esq. of York, in Pennsylvania, to whom he had been for more than two years, very tenderly attached. This union was productive of much happiness to both the parties, during its very brief continuance; and to the widowed survivor, was the occasion of an infinite benefit, with which the highest anticipations of mere earthly felicity, are unworthy of a comparison. "This event," he writes, "produced new feelings, and new principles of action. I was deeply interested in the happiness of my wife; and was almost *compelled* to *pray*. This practice I seldom afterwards omitted; and came by degrees to believe in the holy scriptures. Deistical objections had suddenly and unaccountably ceased to trouble me, and I read my long

neglected Bible with assiduity and the deepest interest. But," he observes, in continuation, "after all, I confess that I had no religion, and had no serious intention of seeking it. I did not, indeed, think a change of heart necessary."

All this, perhaps, can be justly resolved into the operation of mere natural affection. His marriage had given him an interest in an object for whose happiness his benevolence was more distinctly called into exercise than it had ever been before, for any other. The blessing of a superior Power was earnestly desired, on her account; but on the dreary plan of mere deism, could be sought with no possibility of being obtained. He began now to be sincerely willing that the scriptures, and the christian scheme, should be true,—and little more was necessary in order to open his eyes upon the evidence which proves them so. This process of feeling and reasoning, the result of which ultimately proved so salutary, however it may be explained on mere natural principles, was nevertheless conducted by the invisible finger of that God, who is the author of nature itself, and the sovereign disposer of all subordinate causes. Many of his prejudices against christianity continued, even while he admitted the truth of the system.

The whole summer of 1814, Lieut. Bacon was detained at Washington. On the 18th of June, he was promoted to a captaincy in his

corps. Except the few weeks during which the English forces remained on the waters of the Chesapeake, his division of the corps was not called out on active duty. This season of leisure afforded him opportunity to renew the study of the law; of which he very industriously availed himself. His marriage seems to have socialised his feelings, by rousing him from that state of morbid melancholy into which his mind in solitude, was accustomed to subside. As the effect of this improved habit of feeling, he oftener in the absence of his wife, repaired to church on Sundays, read the scriptures, and attended to other religious duties:—his pride and infidelity in the form of a dark and sickly despondency of temper, having formerly stood much in the way of these observances.

On the 9th of January, 1815, he was admitted to the bar, in Washington, having some months previously, entered himself as a student in the office of J. Law, Esq. of this city. His qualifications were considered respectable.

Soon afterwards he was taken suddenly and seriously ill: and from solitude, the expectation of death, and a conscious want of preparation for the event, his mind became more completely awakened to the impressions of religion than it had been since the days of his childhood. He read the scriptures with increased avidity and interest, and prayed with a fervour and affection

unfelt before.* This show of piety continued no longer than its cause lasted. He found no difficulty, on recovering his health, to resume his former habit of indifference. It was however the preposterous indifference of a mind which indolently acquiesced in the truth of christianity. But he never afterwards apostatised to deism.

Mr. Bacon's mind was susceptible in a very unusual degree, to the impressions of kindness; and no feeling could be more easily inspired in it than gratitude. This sentiment sometimes took a decidedly religious cast, whenever he happened to see the connexion of his happiness or his success in life, with an overruling providence.

The birth of his son in the month of March, was an event well suited to call into strong action this constitutional feeling of his mind; and produced a fervent acknowledgment of the unmerited goodness of God, and a general purpose of living more obediently to his commands. But this pious transport was only the gush of a mere natural affection, and soon spent itself.

About the same time, and while attached to the marine service, he was licensed to practise law in the courts of York county, in Pennsylvania. On the resignation of his staff appointment, in May, he repaired to York, on the recruiting service; and on the first of August, opened an Attorney's office in that place. The

* See Appendix, Note V.

multiplication, and perhaps the very nature of his labours in this new profession, proved highly detrimental to his better interests. He soon became inflamed with the desire of distinction and emolument, and entangled with a host of cares, which, to a mind and temper like his, were especially vexatious; and all together, effectually diverted his thoughts from the pursuits of religion.

But Heaven was preparing a shaft to go through his soul, and remind him, by the severest pang it had ever inflicted, of the precarious nature of his best earthly enjoyments. His youthful and amiable wife had nearly recovered her accustomed health, when she became suddenly ill of a nervous complaint, attended with very alarming symptoms. Medicine was baffled. Hope hung trembling over the sinking patient, for a few days; and reluctantly quitting its charge, left the agonising husband to watch her last convulsions. He saw her expire on the 28th of August, 1815. The circumstances of her death were such as afterwards filled him with a melancholy pleasure to recollect them. The strength of her faith, and the vigour of her hopes afforded her not only an easy conquest of the last enemy, but a sublime triumph over all his terrors. But the disconsolate husband was at the time overwhelmed with unutterable distress. He indeed, saw in the stroke, the hand of Omnipotence, and trembled. But he was neither humbled

under it, nor constrained to withdraw his heart, nor his confidence, from the world. The wound in a few weeks ceased to bleed: he resumed his accustomed avocations; and surrendered himself, as before, to the mingled torrent of passions and cares which make up the busy life of a man of the world.

The active ardour with which Mr. Bacon prosecuted his professional and other labours, would be very inadequately represented, by calling him merely industrious. His legal knowledge was never profound: but that, together with all his other acquirements, was eminently adapted to an object of which he seems never to have lost sight,—to attain to eminence, as an efficient practical character. This purpose was partly the result of the constitutional impetuosity of his feelings, and the benevolence of his heart, which led him naturally, to connect the design of practical usefulness with all his plans; and partly, was the dictate of dispassionate and sound judgment. Mr. Bacon knew himself to be constitutionally better fitted for action than study; and very properly judged that his most strenuous efforts, at this period of his life, to become accurately learned in the theory of his profession, would be baffled by those very qualities which, with due cultivation, might render him eminently useful as a practitioner. He rapidly advanced in his profession; and soon acquired an extensive practice. He was inde-

fatigable in his attention to the business put into his hands; and, in no known instance, departed from that unbending line of integrity which, through life, he most scrupulously observed. His habitual generosity was exercised to the same liberal extent, as in the more circumscribed sphere which he had formerly held. "From his papers which have come to my hands since his decease," writes an intimate friend, "I have found, that in several instances where his poor clients were pressed, he had advanced considerable sums to relieve them without a hope of ever being repaid." To the same pen the writer is likewise indebted for the additional information, that "Mr. Bacon not only spoke with great fluency, but often with eloquence, at the bar; and even in the dry details of a law-speech, he exhibited a richness and exuberance of mind that always excited interest."

Mr. Bacon at this period enjoyed a healthy habit of body, and a comparatively equable temperament of mind; possessed a good classical and legal education; a moral character, in the eye of the world, untarnished; and such an experimental acquaintance with the world, as the daily intercourse of several years with men of every grade and description, was able to impart. Such qualifications soon gave him a commanding influence in the community of which he was now a member. When he resigned his commission as captain of marines, in November, 1815, he had received

the appointment of deputy attorney of the United States district court, for York and Adams, in Pennsylvania; and was soon after elected Major of a regiment of the Militia. His exertions for improving the organization and discipline of the militia, during the three years of his residence in York, were unremitting and successful. His situation in short, united almost every ingredient which enters into the world's definition of felicity; and to the mind which aspires after no better happiness than results from the most propitious external circumstances, it must have been enviable. But it is necessary only to appeal to the experience of every reader, in order to convey to him the best idea of that cheerless, and distressing vacuity of mind, which still preyed on his internal peace. He was too honest not to be conscious of the secret disgust which he felt towards the very things which he was resolved should make him happy. He had always aimed to possess the best gifts of the world, and at this time, could conceive of nothing better. But he was not happy.

CHAP. IV.

No speculation could be wilder or more adventurous, than to attempt to trace, in the ever varying sensations of a soul so susceptible and so active as Mr. Bacon's, the precise method observed by the divine Spirit in producing a proper conviction of sin, and 'renewing his mind after the image of Christ.' Omniscience alone can interpret all the minute actings of the affections; and separate from the compound of passion, imagination, and mere animal sensations, the operations of divine grace. But the Spirit of God seldom, or never converts the soul of an adult sinner, without, in some stage of the work exciting strong emotions: and, as incidents and circumstances make up the tissue of every man's life, they come necessarily to be associated with the divine work itself. Still, the change itself which the scriptures so fully describe, and so expressly pronounce to be an indispensable qualification for salvation, is of the most simple character; and essentially distinct from all attendant circumstances. The seat of it is in the moral faculties of the mind; and it essentially consists in a supernatural translation of the affections from self, sin, and the world; and their steady and confirmed attachment to holiness, and to God. Every heir of life has experienced this

change; and evinces its reality by a conduct which a rational man would naturally expect him to exhibit. He separates himself from the pursuit of the lusts, vanities, and pomps of life, and whatever else the change of his affections has rendered distasteful and odious; and follows after righteousness, peace, temperance, purity, faith, Heaven,—all things, in short, which the Spirit of God has taught him supremely to love and value. Where these substantial proofs of conversion are found,—admit that the man is deceived in many of his own feelings; admit that he is weak, ignorant, or superstitious; that his imagination illudes him with its extravagant and visionary creations: his weaknesses are no doubt to be pitied,—but, who is authorised to pronounce him merely because weak or visionary, devoid of the grace of life? A cloud floating in our atmosphere, may obscure the face of the sun; but cannot blot it from the system: its reflection may be broken and ruffled in the agitated pool; while the luminary itself holds its orbit undisturbed, and pours a steady light. Grace may reign in the soul, and govern the life, while a superstitious imagination deforms the heavenly principle, and ignorance clouds the understanding which it pervades.

The mysterious grace of God which was soon to make of the subject of this narrative, a distinguished 'vessel of mercy,' had, unperceived and even without his distinct concurrence, wrought

a gradual preparation in his mind for the thorough renewal which followed. His feelings were sooner excited, and his thoughts more easily fixed, by the truths of religion, than formerly. He visited his native place for the last time, in September, 1816: saw in many of his former acquaintances, a very manifest change of religious character; and seems to have been particularly struck with the alteration wrought by the same cause, in the domestic scene. His aged father was drawing to the close of his protracted pilgrimage in a devout and peaceful frame,—the manifest offspring of a living faith in his Redeemer; and appeared to derive such a sublime delight from communion with his God, and from the various exercises of his worship and praise, as arrested the attention, and excited some serious reflections in the mind of Samuel. On the night succeeding the second day of his homeward journey, he had retired to his chamber in health, and enjoyed an unusual redundancy of animal spirits. The world and its pursuits presented themselves to his imagination in their most attractive forms. He dwelt upon his own prospects in life with delightful anticipations, and was employing his thoughts in arranging plans of future advancement and emolument. By a strange bodily sensation, the cause of which does not very plainly appear, the vision was annihilated in a moment; and he fully believed himself in the agonies of death. His respiration was burden-

ed almost to suffocation; and a paroxysm of exhaustion, distress and convulsions, seized upon the vital parts of the system, and seemed to his affrighted imagination, to threaten immediate dissolution. He then felt his unfitness to die, and could contemplate in the eternity before him, only a justly offended God, and a world of dreadful retribution. His cries were raised in an agony of despair and terror, to the burning throne: but they were offered without faith, and procured him no relief. He felt himself, to employ his own language, "withering under the touch of death," and perishing, without an hour's reprieve, or a ray of hope. He petitioned for a day,—for a few hours, only, of respite, from the instant doom which he felt impending; and tacitly resolved, with the solemnity of a religious vow, to consecrate the precious moments which should be afforded, wholly to the preparation of his wretched soul for judgment. Whether the imagination, or some physical affection be supposed the principal cause of this distressing paroxysm, its effects were the same. The expectation of immediate death could not have been more strongly impressed by any cause whatever: and the event itself could scarcely have increased his alarm and terror. On obtaining relief, he ratified his resolutions by a deliberate promise to seek the Lord's favour until he obtained it. The reader, but moderately skilled in the deceitfulness of his own heart, has

already anticipated the fate of resolutions originating as these did. Mr. Bacon spent the ensuing day thoughtfully. He more than once addressed a forced petition to Heaven. The impression daily got fainter; till, on his arrival in Philadelphia, he was the same thoughtless worldling as before.

His health was again affected. A strong temptation to violate the Sabbath by travelling unnecessarily, occurred at the same time, and ensnared him. His conscience was again aroused, and, assisted in its rebukes by the recollection of vows so recently violated, stung him to a transport of mental agony little short of madness. Often did he check the reins of his horse, half resolved to proceed no further. An habitual seriousness rested on his mind from this time, until, with his returning health he suffered himself to be overwhelmed with the cares of business. Still, he continued to read the scriptures, but lost that earnest spirit of inquiry which on the occasions of his late alarm, so entirely occupied his mind. He likewise found all his convictions and purposes, too inoperative to engage him in a course of habitual prayer. He did not, for several weeks, repeat even the Lord's prayer. In this one trait, the difference, how marked! between the unconverted formalist, and the humble believer. 'Will the hypocrite always call upon God?' is an interrogative, which, in the answer it dictates, explains the

true cause of Mr. Bacon's uniformly declining seriousness, and the failure of his best purposes and attempts in religion. Without Christ, apprehended and formed in the soul by a living faith, the sinner can do nothing. Armed with the might of a divine Helper, the weakest believer is enabled to adhere with general and persevering consistency to the sincere purpose which he ventured, with much trembling, and deep self-distrust, to conceive before his God. The very consciousness of his insufficiency constrains him incessantly to cry to his Saviour for more grace. Thus is secured his steady attendance on this vital exercise of the christian. And his prayer is heard. He is never left without that supply of the Spirit of grace which answers his present need, and enables him to render a *consistent*, however imperfect, an obedience to the commands of Christ. Mr. Bacon had not embraced, and did not confide in the promise, 'my grace shall be sufficient for thee.' He was accordingly left, to learn by repeated and aggravated relapses, his own insufficiency. Here is the point too, which very many who commence a religious course, never pass: and either rest, through life, in a round of mechanical and heartless services; or, as more commonly happens, utterly apostatise from the pursuit of religion, and become its worst opposers.

The fear of death shortly invaded him again; excited a guilty conscience, to discharge its

dreadful office with still bitterer criminations, and more alarming anticipations than before; and after many hours of fruitless supplication, subsided into a tranquil calm of the soul. This visitation of the hand of God he was not able to forget entirely. He gave, from this period, a more constant attendance on preaching; read the Bible, prayed, bought religious books, and without discovering his intention to any one, was disposed to make religion a very serious matter both of inquiry and practice. He still appears to have been a stranger to Jesus Christ, the source and channel, of all efficient spiritual influences. The word sown in his heart was still on 'the stony ground where it had not much depth of earth;' and however promising in appearance, was without root, and 'in the hour of temptation, withered away.' He, indeed, was convinced that he had not attained to a state of safety; but, for a short time had too much confidence in the efficacy of his own dead works "performed without grace" to advance him to that desirable state, to relinquish his dependence on them, and trust alone, in the righteousness of Christ. With the root of self-righteousness still vigorous in his heart, was united its inseparable concomitant, great ignorance of the way of salvation, by faith. This indeed, is a mystery which can be fully learnt only by experience. But Mr. Bacon appears not to have possessed even that theoretical knowledge of the important doctrine which

many persons, as destitute of saving faith as himself, have nevertheless, acquired. While he continued to acquit himself, with tolerable regularity, in the duties to which he was now addicted, his conscience slumbered; and a vague hope of finally escaping the wrath of God, and obtaining his favour, held him fast in its delusion. But God again suffered him to fall by a train of temptations, an easy prey to sins, which he could not reconcile with the character even of a sincere and earnest inquirer in religion. He had been invited by his gay associates, to unite with them in a scene of fashionable dissipation; and so utterly destitute of firmness to withstand the solicitation did he find himself, that he yielded an almost unhesitating compliance. While participating in this frivolous amusement, all serious reflection was stifled; and he was conscious of no other restraint on the levity of his feelings, than that which the laws of decency and custom impose. He was at this time, in Lancaster. On his return to York, the next day, he had leisure to review his conduct, in the black shade thrown over it by the recollection of violated resolutions and vows, and the consciousness of having offered a direct resistance to the suggestions of the divine Spirit, and of violating his own knowledge and convictions of duty. He perceived that he had not only been overcome by the temptation, but vanquished almost without an opposing struggle. His reflec-

tions were distracting; and hurried him into a state of mind but little short of despair. He dared not even pray for forgiveness. Either the agitation of his thoughts, or real indisposition, impressed strongly on his imagination the expectation of sudden death. His health again became sensibly affected; and he ventured to pray only for strength to reach home, and permission to die in the midst of his friends. He arrived. But his spirit found no rest: it had received a wound, which every recollection aggravated, and all his attempts to heal were worse than idle. The hand of the Almighty had inflicted it, and the remedy was only with himself. He read the scriptures, prayed, wept, but to no purpose. He was even tempted to drown his anguish in intoxication: but God mercifully overruled the intention. His imagination was still full of the apprehension of a sudden death—and while he repressed the open expression of his feelings, he more than once took a final leave as he supposed, of his child, and his friends. His inward anguish and alarm so far predominated as to overcome, at length, the pride of heart which had hitherto restrained him from availing himself of the counsel and society of his pastor and christian friends. It cost him even now, a severe struggle to withdraw himself from a number of his customary associates, and go and unbosom himself to the clergyman on whose ministry he attended. In this interview, to employ his own phraseology, "he cried and

roared aloud :" and it was not until he had freely given vent to the strongest of his feelings, that he could utter his errand in intelligible language. The clergyman found it needful to appease the violent agitation of his mind ; and afterwards imparted to him a variety of counsel ; the purport of all which seems to have fallen much short of Mr. Bacon's expectations ; and he returned disappointed and dejected. Perhaps no pastoral duty, not even that which the ordinary death-bed calls upon a minister to perform, is so awfully momentous, or so difficult, as that of directing the mind of a convinced and thoroughly awakened sinner into the narrow path of salvation. Advance, he must : and the very next step taken in such a crisis, may be decisive of his eternal doom. The skilful physician will endeavour to accommodate the advice afforded in different cases, to their respective circumstances ; but the example of the primitive ministers of the gospel, and the very nature of the sinner's wants unite in determining that counsel to be the safest, and generally far the most beneficial, which shall most magnify the offices of the Saviour, and enforce an immediate recourse by faith, to his cross. The more intelligibly this act of faith can be explained to his mind, and the more essential to his salvation, it can be made to appear, the more efficacious, as a means of grace, the advice will be likely to prove. The inquirer himself, it is always to be presumed, is a very incompetent

judge of the treatment best adapted to his own case. Mr. Bacon's disappointment, on this occasion, to whatever it might be owing, was probably serviceable to him ; as it more effectually taught him the fallacy of all expectations of relief not founded on the mercy and power of God alone. The perusal of "Doddridge's Rise and Progress," which was put into his hands at the time, was an important help ; as, by preserving him from absolute despair, it gave him the power of concentrating his thoughts without distraction, on the great doctrines of salvation. His time was as much devoted to inquiry on these subjects, and to public prayer, as his secular avocations would permit. Thenceforward he mingled more freely, than ever before, in the circles of the pious, and found a great advantage in their society. It was by no means the least, that he was at once delivered from many of the temptations and dangers, unavoidably growing out of his former connexions. The spirit of grace continued gradually to enlighten his mind, with a clearer knowledge of the gospel ; and in a few weeks, he found himself able to repose his soul with a happy confidence on his Saviour.

At what moment the gift of faith was first imparted, and his heart brought to bow with entire submission to the yoke of Christ, does not plainly appear. But, from the period to which this part of the narrative refers, he seems never, even for a day, to have remitted the pursuit of

his salvation; and scarcely to have declined, by a single relapse, from those high attainments in faith and holiness, which he was enabled through an abundant supply of grace, to make with a rapidity seldom exceeded by the most favoured christian. But it will be seen, that the original corruptions of his heart were not at once, eradicated, nor the current of habit reversed, by an absolute exertion of divine power. But grace eventually accomplished this work by engaging all the powers of his mind in a long and arduous course of exertion, vigilance and self-denial. His conflicts were often sharp and painful: but commonly of momentary continuance. The fervency of his prayers, and the habitual prevalence of a vigorous faith gave him an easy and rapid conquest of his spiritual foes. Nearly every struggle against sin proved to him the occasion of a new victory over it, till, by a dispensation as merciful to him, as mournful to the world he left, he was early translated to the scene of his everlasting triumph.

The preceding narrative has brought down Mr. Bacon's history to the month of April, 1817. Sensible of the deficiency of his knowledge in religion, and in conformity with an excellent usage of the German Lutheran church, he lost no time in enrolling himself among the catechumens under its nurture and instruction. The connexion was consummated on the 24th and 25th of May, by his baptism, and admission to the holy

communion. His participation in these ordinances of his Saviour was not attended with all that immediate benefit which many have derived from them. Indeed, the standard of his attainments in piety, which he at first proposed to himself, was far from being elevated; and he neither sought, nor expected those abundant communications of the love of Christ which he afterwards so happily realised. But his face was immoveably set, and his heart steadfastly directed in the pursuit of eternal life. All indecision on the main question of devoting his life to the service of God was effectually excluded. He appears from the commencement of his religious life to have 'continued instant in prayer;' and made the regular and frequent attendance on this duty in private, a part of the stated business of every subsequent day of his life; and in this one practice, consisted the principal means of his uniform growth in grace, and eminent attainments in holiness. The most distinguishable features in his early religious character were deep humility, and a spirit of ardent supplication: to both of which, the most express promises of increasing grace are made in the word of God. Although connected with the Lutheran church, he confined neither his intercourse, nor his fellowship, to the members of that communion. He particularly delighted to mingle with the little associations of praying souls, belonging to different christian denominations in the place, who 'often assembled

themselves together' agreeably to the advice of the apostle, for mutual exhortation and united intercessions before the throne of their common Lord. In this edifying practice the members of four or five different communions were harmoniously united. Mr. Bacon had perhaps, too precipitately, as he afterwards supposed, attached himself to the Lutheran church. It is certain that many, and indeed most of his chosen associates, in whom was found that congeniality of religious feelings and views, which alone could now lay the foundation for an intimate christian intercourse, belonged to other denominations. And whether the piety of the members of this church, generally, was of a lower order, or whether the customary expressions of it only, were of a less ardent cast, he soon found in other churches the means of spiritual enjoyment and improvement, of which he had not been able to avail himself so fully in his own. The use of the German language likewise, in which the ministrations of the Lutheran church were frequently conducted for the benefit of a part of the congregation, interrupted the progress of his own improvement, in this communion. For these reasons, principally, the worship, and general character of the Episcopal church on whose public and occasional services he frequently attended, soon acquired a decided preference in his mind. Believing that his own advancement in grace would be considerably promoted by a direct connexion with

it, he accordingly removed his relation from the Lutheran, to this communion, a very few months only after his union with the former. Of the expediency of this step, christians of different persuasions will judge variously. He ever afterwards, regarded it as highly conducive to his personal comfort, and public usefulness; but regretted sincerely, the painful sacrifice of feeling which it cost him to dissolve his connexion with a christian communion, to which he had many reasons for cherishing a strong attachment.

Although occupied in no ordinary degree, in the momentous concerns of religion, he abated nothing of the diligence due to his secular duties. He had been appointed in February, of this year, prosecuting Attorney for the county of York, and was deeply engaged in the business of his profession. His industry was however, the result of a new set of principles, and terminated in objects essentially different from any which had previously animated it. The love of the world had subsided, and the strength of his ambition for human distinction, was for ever slain by the exhibition which faith had afforded him of his suffering Saviour's cross.

CHAP. V.

Indolence was no trait of Mr. Bacon's character: nor was it compatible with the imitation of that Saviour's example, or the spirit of his religion, whom he had voluntarily received as his Lord and Master. To do good to others became the next object of his ardent desire, after he became satisfied of his own interest in so great a benefit, as the regeneration and commencement of spiritual life, in his own heart. His thoughts were naturally directed to the ministry, as the most effectual means of advancing his Saviour's interests in the world, and applying the blessings of his gospel to the souls of men. But for nearly two years a survey of the responsibilities of that office, an enlightened view of the requisite qualifications, and a lively perception of his own deficiencies, overawed the timid aspirations of his mind to so high a vocation. And the wisdom and kindness of God are now apparent in the delay which intervened. He was to be thoroughly disciplined for the holy work, the sincerity of his zeal fully attested, and the measure of his experience and knowledge greatly extended, by an humbler, and perhaps, quite as useful an occupation. Some thousands of neglected children were destined to receive through him the rudiments of a chris-

tian education; and the cause of Sabbath school instruction, to derive from his example and labours, a practical demonstration of its excellence and utility, which the exertions of no other individual in this country had so fully afforded.

No field of benevolent labour could have presented, which promised to reward the culture that such talents as Mr. Bacon's were eminently calculated to bestow upon it, with a richer harvest. The care and instruction of youth and children, were always favourite objects of his attention. He habitually regarded them not merely, as the prattling inmates of the domestic sanctuary; but as destined to become the constituent members of human society, sustaining on their own shoulders the mighty fabric, and occupied in transacting its most weighty concerns. While they waited only for their predecessors to retire and give them their appointed place on the stage of life, his benevolence prompted him to seize the golden opportunity with a zeal approaching to enthusiasm; and to infix in their minds the knowledge and principles, of which their destination was so soon to require the application. The prospect which animated these exertions was now expanded to infinity itself; and even what related to the present world, was enlarged to comprehend the interests of religion, the vast amount of human happiness connected with it, and the future prosperity of the church of God. He had likewise, from long experience

in training the young mind to improvement, become thoroughly acquainted with its character, and eminently skilled in its management. Seldom had he failed to secure the affection and the confidence of his pupils.

He lost no time in resolving to undertake, in the fear of God, something for the spiritual benefit of this interesting class of immortals. The SUNDAY SCHOOL system appeared to promise advantages, which no other known method of juvenile religious instruction possessed. The surprising multiplication of these institutions during the last thirty years can have left very few in any part of Protestant christendom, entirely unacquainted either with their origin, or happy effects. Their original design was to reclaim from a habit of profaning the sacred day, and to instruct in the rudiments of learning and morality, the children of the lowest classes of the poor, whose education would else have been utterly neglected.

The individual who first conceived the benevolent scheme, and partially reduced it to practice, was Robert Raikes, a member of the society of Friends in Gloucester, England. His personal exertions commenced in 1781 ; and all the advantages of the system, were, for about two years, confined to the children of that single town. His example at length, began to find imitators ; and the christian public came by degrees, to discover that the system of Sunday

school instruction offered the most effectual remedy which had ever been applied to the ignorance, irreligion, and innumerable other moral and social evils arising out of the neglected education of the poor. Persons of all denominations with whom the improvement of the condition of the poor had been a matter of solicitude, began to collect the neglected children and youths within their influence, and place them under proper instructers of both sexes, to be taught on Sundays, the rudiments of learning and christianity. Thus far, they were satisfied with a simple imitation of the plan pursued by Raikes, the originator of the system. But the improvements, which have been subsequently added, were necessary to give to these institutions, their full and proper effect. Without detracting from the praise justly due to their disinterested founder, these improvements may be considered as extending, not only to the mode of conducting them, but to the object itself which the system designs to accomplish. In order to meet the expense, and extend the benefits of these institutions, Mr. Raikes soon found it necessary, to combine the exertions of their friends into a systematic form. Sunday school societies, consisting of the individuals directly engaged in supporting and instructing the several schools of a particular district, were accordingly formed for mutual consultation and aid. The advantages realised from these associations led to the consolidation of all the societies in a

still larger district, under a more general association: and in 1803, the SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION of London was formed, comprehending under it all the societies, and country Unions in the kingdom. The business of the union is conducted by a board of managers; and consists in preparing suitable books for the use of the societies, in systematising and improving the method of instructing and organising the schools, in exercising over them a paternal superintendence, and extending all practicable encouragement and aid to the whole.

The societies in the earlier stages of their exertions, uniformly paid their teachers for their services. The Sunday school society of the metropolis alone had expended in this way, as early as the year 1800, four thousand pounds. But, besides the expense attendant on this practice, it was perceived to be objectionable for a variety of other reasons. It was therefore resolved, after sixteen years' experience of its disadvantages, to reform this part of the system. The appeal was accordingly made to those on whose benevolence the cause itself should impress a sufficient motive to engage them in the self-denying service. This resolution was adopted by many societies with painful apprehensions for the probable result. But instead of a diminution of the number of teachers, the consequence was their immediate and surprising increase, wherever the measure of gratuitous in-

struction was adopted. It was soon discovered that thousands of persons of respectable character and the most competent qualifications, whom the offer of pecuniary compensation could never engage in the service of teaching, stood ready to undertake it at the call of charity. The cause immediately felt, in its remotest extremes, the invigorating influence of this important improvement in the system; and found a host of devoted and efficient advocates and coadjutors raised up for its support in every part of the kingdom.* This latter feature, has naturally led to a gradual alteration in the whole character of

* The extent to which Sunday schools have multiplied, and their advantages been diffused, may be imperfectly seen by the following very compressed statement formed from the latest returns which have been published in an authentic form.

In England, the plan of the National school partially takes the place of the Sunday school system. There are nevertheless in that country, more than 80 unions, containing 2,568 schools, 32,283 teachers, and 274,845 learners. The scholars taught in succession for twenty years past, form an average not much below this number.

In Scotland there was likewise supposed to exist in the Sabbath evening schools, and the system of parochial instruction, a substitute for Sunday schools, established on the English plan. But since the formation of an union in this country, 567 new schools, and 39,183 children have been received under its care.

The Sunday school Society for Ireland, reports the number of schools on their list to be 1,091, and of scholars, 113,525.

the system. The experiment of more than twenty years has fully demonstrated that no other principle but that of an operative christian faith and piety, can, on the present system, engage in a persevering and zealous course of Sabbath school labours, the professed friends of the cause. The service is too humble, too laborious, and attended with too few earthly rewards long to animate any charity except that of the gospel. Hence, universally, wherever these

The Protestant parts of France, and Holland are slowly imitating the example of Great Britain, in the establishment of a number of schools; many of which, particularly in Holland, are in a flourishing state.

By the exertions of Missionaries, schools have likewise been commenced in most of the West India Islands; in Canada, New-Brunswick, New-Foundland, and at the different Missionary stations in India, West Africa, and the American wilderness. At Sierra Leone, 4,000 are enjoying the benefit of these institutions.

Owing to the detached character of the efforts making in this cause by every denomination of christians in the United States, it is impossible to bring the aggregate results into a single view. While comparatively a very small part of the ground which should be cultivated, has been occupied, much, very much, has been already effected, and still more attempted, in this noblest of the efforts of charity. The Sunday and Adult school Union of Philadelphia combines a much greater number of schools than is associated under any other single body in this country. In May, 1821, the managers of this Union reported in their connexion, in eleven different states, 313 schools, 3,724 teachers, and 24, 218 scholars.

excellent institutions have been formed, they have naturally fallen into the hands of the most devoted and spiritual of the Redeemer's followers. Of this character, are, by far their most influential, as well as a great majority of their conductors and friends; even while the system indiscriminately invites all of exemplary deportment, to aid in carrying on the work. Of the objections originally alleged against these schools, one of the most serious, represented them as incompatible with the sacred design of the Sabbath: nor is it quite certain that the method in which they were originally managed, may not, in some degree, have made them justly liable to this exception. But the general piety of the instructers, and the gradual modification of the whole system in conformity to their convictions of the sacredness of this institution, have so completely obviated the scruples even of the most conscientious, as to secure in behalf of the cause the entire approbation of christians of every variety of faith and discipline in the world. Without any prejudice to the advancement of the scholars in the necessary branches of human learning, every part of the instruction is made strictly subservient to their religious improvement. Hence they come to associate all the knowledge of letters which they acquire, with the truths and precepts of the scriptures. In innumerable instances the members of these schools have been known to imbibe along with

the rudiments of learning, the spirit of the gospel; and during all their subsequent progress, have clearly displayed its holy influence in their improving tempers and habits; and in riper age, when surrounded with the cares and temptations of life, have preserved a consistent course of christian piety.

Mr. Bacon's first step, towards the formation of Sunday schools in York county, was fervently to commend the undertaking to God. His next was to interest in the object, and engage to second his exertions by a zealous co-operation, a select few, whose hearts were warmed with the same sacred flame which animated his own. Individuals of this character he saw were to be drawn together from all the different christian societies in the place :—an object which he happily accomplished by setting them the example of sacrificing party-feelings and prejudices, so far as to meet and unite on the common ground of a disinterested and practical charity. A Sunday school society for York county was immediately formed, on the 7th of August, 1817, and down to the present date, it may be remarked in anticipation, has been so highly favoured, as to preserve a good share of the spirit of harmony and christian love in which it originated. Mr. Bacon was placed in the chair; and held the same situation until he finally removed from the county. A school for children was opened on the 17th, in the village of York, with

twenty-six scholars. The number shortly increased to two hundred; and the society has since exhibited on its rolls, more than three hundred.

The moral condition of no class of the population of Pennsylvania exhibits so much debasement and wretchedness, as that of the free blacks. Mr. Bacon and his zealous associates could not comtemplate so moving a spectacle without pitying the sufferers. To pity, was with him, to attempt their relief. A school for adults of this class, without excluding others of the same age who chose to attend, was accordingly opened, in September. But the opportunity for improving their minds thus afforded, was still deemed too circumscribed; and at Mr. Bacon's suggestion was extended to four additional nights in every week. Not only did the direction of these schools chiefly devolve on himself; but he constantly took an active and laborious part in the business of instructing them. It was his 'meat and his drink' to be active for his Saviour, and the souls whom he had redeemed with his blood. Love to God, and its natural offspring and best expression, love to the souls of his fellow immortals, was the principle which invigorated every effort, and directed his zeal to the grand object of promoting their eternal salvation. It could repose on no inferior interest. His daily and nightly labours, prayers, and nameless conflicts, were all directed to this

end. This object furnished to all his addresses, their subjects and illustrations; shaped their style; softened and qualified his whole deportment; and in short, took the precedence in his mind, of every other. Hundreds live to testify, that their own salvation was thus pursued with such ardour and perseverance, and led to such sacrifices, as placed his sincerity in the sacred work beyond all doubt, and proved the impressions made by the declarations of holy writ on the enlightened eye of his faith, to be much more vivid than those which the events of time, and the things of the world, could produce on his imagination and senses. His views of the lost condition and utterly corrupted character of the unregenerate, whether old or young, were eminently scriptural; and resulted from the convincing comment on the declarations of scripture, which the divine Spirit had written upon his own heart. As a dependent instrument, he always aimed to fix this conviction effectually in the consciences of the youth of his charge, as an essential prerequisite to repentance and conversion. In short, he justly regarded children as men in miniature, requiring the same atonement, the same regeneration, the same divine faith, and the same sanctifying spirit of grace to deliver them from the "wrath of God revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men." The language of his addresses was at once simple and forcible; and

they commonly found out the conscience, to which they were always powerfully directed. "I am grieved," he declared, on one of these occasions, "to see you so careless of the salvation of your souls. If a happy spirit could come from Heaven and tell you how much it cost to get there; or if a miserable soul could come from Hell and tell you of the unheard of and unexpected torments it found there; you would all fall upon your trembling knees and begin to pray. Many, many young persons, it is probable, are now in ruin and torment, for doing those very things which you do, and for not doing those very things which you leave undone, every day. God's holy law is a very strict one. You are all exceedingly wicked in his sight. He says, you shall give an account of every idle word. If you are angry with one another, without good cause, He looks upon it as bad as murder: if you covet or wish to possess the good things of another, He looks upon it as bad as stealing: if you tell or wish to tell falsehoods about any person, He looks upon it as bad as bearing false witness: if you love any person or thing better than God, you worship that person or thing as an idol: if you spend your time in idleness during the working days of the week, or if you do not worship God faithfully on the Sabbath, you are condemned by God for breaking that commandment; and so on through the whole. Now you are, every one,

under a sentence of condemnation. For you have broken God's holy laws, a thousand times; whereas, if you had only broken them once, God would have condemned you. It is *most certain*, if you do not repent of your sins and pray to God to forgive them, you must go to Hell. Every time you stay from school; every time you laugh or play in school; every idle word you speak in school; every wicked idle thought you think in school, God takes notice of, and condemns you for it. You know, if a bad man steal or murder or do any other crime, they have him tried by the judge in court, and he is condemned to be punished; but if he repent and become good, some good person may go to the governor and get him pardoned; and then the man is not punished, but returns to his friends. Now, these wicked things you have all done in the sight of God, and He has had you all condemned to be sent to a dreadful Hell. But if you will repent and confess to God how bad you have been; and if you sincerely cry to Him to have mercy upon you, there is a mighty Saviour who will go and plead with God for you to be pardoned. It is Jesus Christ, who died for you, and who well knows how much your souls cost; and God has promised to pardon all wicked persons, who repent and cry for mercy, because Jesus Christ died to obtain their pardon, and make them for ever happy. O how good was this Saviour, to die instead of us! What

wicked creatures we are, who do not love such a Saviour! We are now going to fall down and pray to God, while He stands looking into our hearts. He sees what we are now doing. He knows what we are now thinking: and hears what we are now speaking. There is a wicked little girl who is thinking bad! God knows it, and it is written in the book of His remembrance. Oh what bad thoughts! They are written down and all the hosts of Heaven can read them. We cannot read them now; but they will be told to all the world in the day of judgment; and then every one in this room will hear them. Here is a little child who is speaking and playing! God has had that put down too. Oh how terrible it is to have it written in God's book for all the world to read!

"That child who would not come to school last Sabbath, and who has been angry and told some lies and would not learn the scripture lesson! All that is put down in that dreadful book, and that child is condemned to be cast into Hell. But if the child will only pray for mercy, God will forgive these great sins, for the sake of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. And if we do not pray soon, it may be too late; because we may die. So many are dying in the world, that learned people say, sixty persons die every minute. They are dying as fast as you can say dead, dead, dead, dead. Four persons are supposed to have died, while I was saying those

words. In the last half hour only, I expect eighteen hundred persons have died. What a mercy none of us were in this number. Perhaps we shall be among those who are to die the next half hour. May God have mercy on us, and help us to pray earnestly, that our souls may be converted and saved.

"My dear children, let me ask you who wants to go to Heaven? Do you? And do you? And do you?—Then you must pray. Prayer will open the door for you. You must repent of your sins. You must love God, and your Saviour. You must love your teachers and each other. You must come constantly to school. You must bring all the other children that you can find. You must continue to be learners in school, till you get to be teachers; and you must labour to do good as long as you live."

Mr. Bacon seldom omitted any opportunity of doing good which was providentially presented. But his zeal was still directed by judgment, and tempered with unfeigned christian affection; and no labour to him was too humble which promised to benefit an immortal soul. The succeeding paragraphs are extracted from a letter addressed to a youth in Philadelphia, who at its date, was but a single remove from childhood.

"Dear James,

"It occured to me while sitting alone and thinking of Philadelphia, its schools and its

children, that I might turn my acquaintance with some of the youths to a good account. Perhaps, I thought to myself, God will bless a word of advice to James L. if I should sit down and write him a letter. So I instantly took up my pen, and have proceeded so far with it. I thought within myself, that James loves me, because I took notice of him and treated him affectionately. I love him too; not on account of his dress; not on account of his looks, or personal appearance; not on account of his learning; not on account of his friends and relations; but I love him on account of his modest, meek, and pious appearance, and because he loves and obeys his teachers and strives to do good. I hear he goes about to persuade boys to come to Sunday school, and does all the good he can. I love him because I think he prays and reads his Bible, and loves God. These are some of the reasons, why I love James L. But the chief reason why I love him is, not for any thing that he now is, but for what he is capable of being, and what he certainly will be, if he strives with all his heart,—a saint in glory. Now surely, my dear James, you will not suppose that one, who loves you, would give you bad advice or tell you things not true. Well, I am going to tell you what is very true. You have a very wicked heart. All people have wicked hearts at first; when they are young they are born with them: and they all continue to be very wicked, till God

gives them a new heart. Has God ever changed your heart, or *created it anew?* Have you ever been "born again?" has your soul ever been converted? If not, James, you must pray to God to create your heart anew. You must pray every night and morning. Before you go to Sunday school you must fervently pray to God to give you grace to learn, and do good. You ought not to be a teacher, till you have been adopted by God into the number of his believing children. I desire you would ponder these things in your heart and be earnest in prayer. It is our privilege to "rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in every thing give thanks." That is, to have a devotional, prayerful spirit, and also to rely on God as our father in such a manner, as to feel grateful for even his chastisements, and to rejoice under the heaviest afflictions, of a temporal nature. When you become a true christian, what a happy boy you will be! Oh do not permit a moment to pass without letting it carry home to God a good account of you."

The foregoing extracts are introduced chiefly in order to illustrate the example which Mr. Bacon gave, of a close imitation of his Saviour, in a trait of his character which perhaps the pride of our nature, renders it more difficult perfectly to copy, than many others,—his love and condescension to little children. In a large share of Mr. Bacon's labours for their benefit,

the ordinary stimulants of false zeal, and hypocrisy, scarcely, it would seem, had room to operate at all. These are the exertions, therefore, which if not his most disinterested and useful, certainly more than any others, evince to his fellow-men, the abstraction of his affections from the world, the purity of his zeal, and the operative strength of his faith.

The discipline of Sunday schools has been a subject of much speculation, and one on which a variety of opinions and practices have obtained among their friends. But wherever their exalted object has been kept fully in view, the proper mode of their government has generally suggested itself. Mr. Bacon regarded these schools as having almost exclusively the nature of religious institutions; and consequently requiring that sort of discipline which the gospel prescribes for training the children of the church for its communion, and for everlasting salvation. Perhaps a more faithful application of these principles of discipline has seldom been made, or been attended with better success, than in the case which Mr. Bacon relates in the following extract.

"L. was a child of ten years old. He seemed to combine in his disposition the cunning of the serpent with the fierceness of the young tiger, and mischievousness of the ape. The first time he attended the Sunday school he stole a testament. He was detected in having it in posses-

sion; but persisted with the most daring effrontery in asserting that he had bought it. The label of 'Sunday school,' which was written in it by the superintendant, was pointed out to him; and that, together with confronting him with the gentleman of whom he said he bought it, and who explicitly declared he had not sold it to him, seemed to have no other effect than to induce him, in defiance of the most positive testimony, to redouble his falsehoods and prevarications. His case was pointed out to all the teachers. We feared to do any thing that might drive him from school, or throw him off our hands unreformed. There was danger of exciting the hostility of his friends, as he was a favourite, and a spoiled child. We exhorted, expostulated, and explained on the holy command,—'Thou shalt not steal;' but without any direct application to him. This course was pursued for one year; about half the Sundays of which he attended school. We had flattered ourselves that he was reformed. But judge of our surprise, when we learnt by information from another scholar, that our books had multiplied on his hands at home, to the number of half a dozen, which he had the hardihood to offer for sale. We then felt him heavy at our skirts. The plan of reformation was soon devised and adopted. L. was taken aside into a vacant room by the superintendant, and his crimes set in full array before him. Warnings, entreaties, life,

death, the gallows and the final judgment, were all called up in aid of the cause of reformation; and at last his soul was commended to God in earnest prayer. The superintendant, having exhausted his stock of grace, turned him over to one of the teachers. The same course was gone through. This done, another teacher, and so on, till seven in succession, exhausted all they had to say.—You may judge of his feelings. At the close of the school, he went home. His friends were at first enraged: but on being told his crimes, and warned, themselves, to look to it, that his blood did not lie at their doors; they became quiet. Two Sabbaths intervened, and no L. appeared in school. But on the third, he made his appearance with all the books under his arm. He gave them to the superintendant, took his seat, and soon manifested that he had left behind him, his former uncomfortable passions and dispositions, and had brought in their stead a temper entirely docile and lamb-like."

On this case Mr. Bacon very justly remarks to his friend, in favour of the course pursued with the little delinquent, and generally, of the utility of the Sabbath school discipline, that "to estimate the value and probable effect of this mode of reformation let us ask whether, if you at the age of ten years had passed a Sabbath afternoon, from one to four o'clock under the reiterated expostulations, and exhortation, watered with the tears, and lifted towards Heaven by the

prayers and sighs of *seven earnest Sunday school champions,* you could ever have forgotten it? It would probably have been a day fresh in your recollection, as long as memory endured. This method has to recommend it, unity of spirit, concert of action, the labour of many, and the experience, the grace and the prayers of all. And if after this, the child should even leave the school, two grand objects are gained: first, your duty is done; secondly, the child carries with him what *he can never forget.*"

The experience of nearly forty years in the management of Sunday schools, by so many thousands of discerning and eminently active christians, could leave little or nothing in the system to be materially improved by the observations of an individual, in the short period of a few months. Mr. Bacon accordingly acquiesced in the plan as it had come into his hands matured by the wisdom of his predecessors. The details of the system however, approved themselves to his judgment; and gave free scope for his zeal to exert itself to the utmost in interesting the public mind, and diffusing the benefits of the institution, as widely as possible. But it would be less than is due to Mr. Bacon's zeal and fidelity in the cause, to conceal that his active invention was constantly suggesting to the society, to his correspondents, and all his christian associates, some new expedients for carrying forward with increased effect their disinteres-

ted labours. These suggestions were equally creditable to his judgment and to his heart. In the very fervour of action, and the severest struggles against opposition, seldom was he known to advise, utter, or do any thing which in the event did not appear to be the result of a rational and sober estimate of all the attendant circumstances, and to prove eventually, beneficial to the cause.

Having in a few months obtained from the effects of the schools in the village of York, a convincing demonstration of their inestimable advantages, and in a good measure occupied the field which they were intended to cultivate, he urged the society to depute their most active members to other parts of the county for the purpose of founding new schools. In this service Mr. Bacon was foremost. The method observed was to assemble the inhabitants of the several villages, and thickly settled parts of the county, explain the design and advantages of Sunday schools, and propose the formation of an auxiliary society for supporting one or more among themselves. When this representation produced, as it seldom failed to do, the desired effect, Mr. Bacon and his coadjutors assisted in the formation of the schools, and even laboriously participated in their management and instruction. During the year 1818, six additional schools, with nearly the same number of auxiliary societies, were thus established; and

in the early part of 1819, twenty-six more! In July, of this year, it was stated in the report read before the parent society in York, that there were then "thirty-three schools, employing about 220 teachers, and containing 2,200 scholars, within the county." These schools, with a very few exceptions, were all the fruits of Mr. Bacon's personal exertions, and owed much of their success, and the interest which they held in the public mind, to his efficient superintendence. Of the report containing this statement, Mr. Bacon was the author. The effect produced on his feelings by so great success in a cause which he considered far the most important that had ever engaged his support, and the incalculable amount of good which he anticipated in the results, were rather deep humiliation, and a sense of unprofitableness than a spirit of self gratulation:—results which the power of divine grace alone could have rendered possible! "We do not," the report proceeds, "review our labours with complacency; for we know we might have done more; we are sure we might have done better." In the same report, he says, "We have now closed our account of the schools. We look at their number and wants, and while we reflect on the circumstances of their establishment, we find that they might have been more numerous, and better conducted. We have been,—we see and feel, 'we have been, unprofitable servants.'"

During a part of 1818, and 1819, his labours arising out of his professional business, and his attention to these schools, were too numerous and exhausting for the strongest constitution and the firmest health, long to sustain. The remotest of the schools which he statedly, and often visited on the Sabbath, were twenty, and even twenty-five miles distant from his residence. He was obliged commonly, in every condition of the weather and roads, to visit several of these schools in the same day, addressing the pupils, encouraging the teachers, examining the minutes, correcting what was wrong in the management, and even cultivating a particular acquaintance with the individual scholars. In performing these weekly circuits, he found it very often necessary to encroach on one or both the days contiguous to the Sabbath, in order to accomplish them. His health was frequently as low as would admit of such frequent exposures and extreme fatigue; and quite as good, as so severe a discipline of his animal and mental powers could reasonably be expected to permit him to enjoy. The nature of these labours is pourtrayed with a colouring so strong and yet so natural and just, in a letter which Mr Bacon addressed to an esteemed christian friend, as to authorise a short extract from it, and atone for the repetition of a few of the foregoing particulars. "You would sometimes smile, and it may be, at others weep at the detail of our ad-

ventures and troubles. Had you seen me at one time beating my way through the hills, with great difficulty, and some danger,—myself, horse, sleigh and all nearly buried in snow-banks: at other times, out late and early, in the wet and cold; drenched in rain; often so exhausted as to be hardly able to address an audience; and ready, not unfrequently, to say that my poor weak constitution had at last received its fatal blow;—you would exclaim that nothing but divine help could have sustained me. You may perhaps, be not quite informed of our method of organising a school in a new place. In opposition to the views and wishes of our Board, I succeeded in prevailing on them to embark in the establishment of distant schools. It was a hard point to gain. This done, a committee was appointed to visit such places as offered a favourable opening. The committee gave notice of the time and place at which they would meet the people to explain the nature of the schools. On the Saturday preceding these appointments, the committee would set out, and arrive in the neighbourhood the same night,—next morning go to the place appointed,—begin with singing and prayer, and address them in a speech of an hour, sometimes two; in which you had bigotry, prejudice and nationality to encounter; together with ignorance, and vice, and folly, in every shape. You had to avoid the prejudices of Quakers, Lutherans, Albrights, Dunkers, Ger-

man Presbyterians, English Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Deists, and at last, my brethern, the cold Episcopalians. The event generally was, that the people agreed to have a school; appointed the officers, and a day for commencing it. The meeting was closed with prayer and praise. On the next Sabbath, and commonly, for one or two succeeding Sabbaths, we must visit the same place to organise the school, and teach it. It is in this way that the schools on our records have struggled into existence. And in this way may schools be established in every county. A few, nay only one zealous individual in the county towns, may be the instrument of exciting the people, and carrying on schools in any county. It has been tried; it is practicable. You see what the Lord hath done for us here. Let a similar course be recommended to other counties. He will do the same every where."

Perseverance amidst the difficulties and labours necessarily attending the advancement of a good cause, requires less fortitude, and is a more equivocal test of a sincere attachment to it, than to be capable of rising above the mortification of reproach, and the sneers of affected contempt. There is no known principle in unregenerate human nature that is proof against an attack from this quarter. But the faith which overcomes the world, opposes an impenetrable shield for the protection of the believer from

these sharpest of the shafts of persecution. He, and he alone can 'rejoice to be accounted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ.' And to this trial, Mr. Bacon's faith, was to a certain extent, subjected in the prosecution of these pious labours. "With the exception of myself," he states, in the same letter, "we have not one active member above the grade of a mechanic. We are shoe-makers, tailors, carpenters, masons, black-smiths,—almost to a man. I except * * * * * who is yet a mere youth, but a very useful and capable one. All our learned and genteel people stand aloof. They neither raise a hand, nor give a cent. These remarks apply to the town only.—Yes, sir, it is cast upon us as a matter of reproach, 'They are all young;'—'They have no old established men amongst them:'—'They are all *low* people, all mechanics, except Bacon; and *he* disgraces himself and his profession by associating with them.' Yet, thanks be to God, Christ is our leader; and we shall triumph. This sort of censure reminds me of the old Pharisaical reproach, 'Is not this the *carpenter's son*?' We have nominal members who are capable of doing much, but *they do not pray*. We cannot send them to our schools. A praying apprentice boy would be more likely to be successful."

Mr. Bacon never sought opposition; but evinced the most conscientious solicitude, on all occasions, that his 'good should not be evil spo-

ken of.' His charity for his fellow-men was too fervent and universal to allow him to desire his own immortal crown to be brightened at the expense of any opposition from the unbelieving, which might involve them in sin, or its punishment. At a later date, than the period to which the foregoing extracts refer, he enjoyed the satisfaction of perceiving that the course which he pursued led, in the providence of God, to a full vindication of his conduct, in the eyes even of his determined opposers: and that scarcely an occasion of distrusting the purity of his motives was left them. To a friend, he writes, in the summer of 1819, "We have our trials. But the circumstances of my having resigned my commissions, quit the practice of the law, and renounced every pursuit from which pecuniary emolument is to be derived, are now known among the schools, and have a surprising effect. The people are astonished. They charged me with interested motives, before. But the occasion for such an imputation, is so completely cut off, that they have not a word to say. They believe me in their consciences, sincere; and every word I address to them, makes an impression on their hearts. I am inclined to think, that all I have done for years past for the schools, will now produce fruit. My voluntary relinquishment of office, honour and money, will have an effect not soon to be got over."

Seldom has consummate christian prudence been more speedily, and entirely triumphant, than in the instance here related. But wherever it is exercised in the same degree, the good effects will always be apparent in the removal of a multitude of obstructions to the progress of the gospel, out of the way. Men will necessarily hate the truth, and show their dislike to those who most resemble their Redeemer, until their hearts are renewed by his grace. But let it be recollected, that every man's conscience, and reason, as far as they are not perverted by false teaching, or clouded with ignorance, are on the side of truth; and whenever assisted by a strictly circumspect and disinterested conduct in the servants of Christ, those faculties of the soul tend strongly to disarm the open hostility which he might otherwise raise against them. To the inquiry, which of the faults of the ministers of religion have most hindered the success of their labours? The proper answer would doubtless assign to the first place, their neglect to cultivate inward holiness; and to the second, their disregard of the Saviour's command, 'be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.'

The enthusiasm of Mr. Bacon's devotion to the cause of Sunday schools was associated with a feeling of the picturesque, and derived its support in part, from a strong sensation of the morally sublime. This feeling was produced by combining in the same view, the present cir-

cumstances of these institutions with the boundless prospect of the future benefits to which they opened; and, by mingling with all the cares and fatigues which they caused him, the strongly excited affections of his heart. Writing to a friend of congenial character in Philadelphia, he relates, that "I have just opened a school, eighteen miles distant, at which forty-five scholars, and one hundred and fifty spectators were present; who all went away exclaiming in the language of the Poacher's Daughter, 'What a fine thing is a Sunday school!' After a short address, twenty-four persons, in about ten minutes, stepped forward and gave, each, a dollar. You would rejoice to have been present and to have seen twenty-three boys from fourteen to eighteen years of age form themselves into a class, to become Sunday school scholars,—all decently clad, healthy, serious, attentive, docile, obedient! It was a lovely sight. God bless them! A meeting had been previously proposed and the inhabitants gathered from the neigbouring country in every direction.—The result was, that each one preferred his entreaties for a school to be opened in his own neighbourhood. Thus the Lord seems to have kindled a fire in our hills and mountains that may be expected soon to break out in different places."

In a letter to the same friend at a subsequent date, he states, "I was yesterday at three different Sunday-school stations; one at ten o'clock

in the morning, and the others at two, and five in the evening. These schools are at the distance of fifteen, eighteen, and twenty miles from York. Of course I was obliged to go out on Saturday, and return on Monday. At two of the places I examined schools, containing, the one thirty, and the other eighty scholars: at the other, I revived a suspended school. On next Sunday I have likewise, three appointments,—one to revive another suspended school, and the other two to establish new ones. Our next report will exhibit about thirty-five schools. I tell you, my friend, I am actually astonished,—extravagant as my anticipations have been,—I am astonished at the extent of what I am enabled to do. It is my God that helps. We build in vain unless the Lord blesses.—But who will take care of the schools when Samuel Bacon is in Africa? Who will willingly, place himself in the hands of his God, and do what he, with many infirmities, is endeavouring to do? Alas! I tremble for these schools.

"You will see on our last report * * * * town Sunday school. I will place that by the side of any similar institution averaging eighty scholars, in Philadelphia. It is in the woods,—the town itself is in the woods, and the school is one mile from town. Yet there are habitations thickly scattered up and down over the mountain, seemingly only fit for rabbits and foxes, presenting here and there a potatoe-field, or other cultivated

spot. From these cottages are gathered in all, about one hundred and forty children, who come a distance of four, and even five miles. They assemble in a log house, which serves the people as a church. Here they learn;—here the Lord blesses. You should see them travelling home with bare feet, as hard as the rocks they climb, and with burnt faces, as brown as the forests where they dwell! Your city Sunday schools are hot houses where you rear a growth of sickly plants;—our mountain schools are glades, where the sturdy oaks of the forest grow."

To illustrate still further the degree in which his heart was at home in these labours, and how prominent a place the great object of doing good held in all his thoughts, another extract of a letter bearing a still later date, is here introduced. "We have a DAILY CHARITY SCHOOL of one hundred scholars, taught every evening from four to six o'clock. Last Sabbath, I visited two of our schools in the country. On my approach within two miles of one of them, I fell in with a little company of children, hastening to it, as cheerful as the birds of the forest where I met them. I followed them through the almost pathless woods,—found thirty-five scholars, half adults, gathered in the house of an old christian, under the brow of a mountain. There the solitary place rejoiced in a song of Zion: amongst the wild shrubbery of the wilderness were seen these blooming plants of immortal growth. I

rejoiced in the prospect of their one day singing in Heaven. A new era, sir, is opening for Sunday schools in this region. Hear it and rejoice. This school was established at the house of an individual, with whom it continued until last Sunday; when another of its friends wished it one Sabbath at his own house; another still, took the hint, and desired to accommodate it at his house on the succeeding Sabbath. Now, sir, I approve the plan, and shall encourage its circulation from house to house. Thus the families of a whole neighbourhood will in turn, receive it;—and with it, the prayers, and the praises which are offered in it. The expense of a house will be spared; the children will have the advantage of a more effectual restraint on the levity of their behaviour; and the school will leave a blessing behind it, wherever it goes. I pursue the hint. In neighbourhoods where no houses can be found for a school, we will adopt this plan. The fashion will spread: half a dozen families will join and instruct their children in rotation: families will learn to observe the Sabbath, and be taught the work of prayer and praise: each will hear His word; and each, become a Bethel.—Knowing as I do, the constitution of society and the customs of the people in our interior, I see this to be all practicable. This school is in the arms of two venerable, and aged farmers, who, to use their own expression, 'have feared the Lord

these thirty years;' and while they water it with their prayers and counsels, those who are younger and better educated, instruct the children."

Among all the trials which this pious philanthrophist was obliged to sustain, the severest arose out of those circumstances which seemed to endanger the prosperity of the schools. His spirit was often wrung by what he deemed the remissness of some of the members of the society in carrying forward the work. Few of his associates perhaps, possessed all his expansive charity; and fewer still, the warmth of his natural temperament. But even his complaints sprung from a principle of disinterestedness, were blended with affection, and were chiefly poured out into the bosom of God, in the same prayer which plead for the souls of the uninstructed children of the county. In his journal under date of December 15, 1818, his feelings on this subject, found utterance in the following lamentation:

"Oh there is such a backwardness in the members of our society to go as teachers to distant schools on the Sabbath! It often seems I am to be left alone, at last! What coldness! What reluctance! My spirit is often so grieved, it almost sinks within me. I often seem to have a mountain upon me, and no one to raise a finger to help me bear it! Oh my God! I cry to Thee! I cry to Thee! Give me a clean heart,

and then give me grace to pray, and faith to believe; and I know that Thou wilt help!—Oh my brother, my brother, that have just left me! You have so grieved my heart, that I know not what to think of you! May God have mercy on you!"

In Pennsylvania, as commonly happens among a population of a various national origin, the descendants of the German, and of the English settlers, are dissociated by strong and nearly invincible jealousies. The former, view with very marked suspicion, any measures which seem to tend either to curtail their influence in the community, or supplant their cherished, national characteristics by the substitution of manners and institutions of English origin. One of the most animating circumstances distinguishing the formation of the Sunday school society of York, was the harmonious concurrence of these formerly discordant masses of the population, in the sacred object. Managers, teachers, scholars, belonging to the two classes, indiscriminately, were for some months, seen amicably united in the common objects of the institution. Besides the direct advantages of the school, the effects of this union of parties in doing away their mutual prejudices, promised to be of the happiest nature. But in about one year after the organisation of the school, Mr. Bacon had occasion to communicate the following intelligence to the "Union" of Philadelphia, with which the

society had then become associated. "It was necessary that we should be opposed in order to be rendered faithful and humble, and be made to feel our dependence on 'the giver of every good and perfect gift.' The German population early took the alarm, and have now quite withdrawn all countenance and support. A defection of teachers, members, scholars and purses, followed. We had been at great expense in providing rooms, books, furniture and fuel for three hundred and fifty scholars. Our expenses during the year just ended, have amounted to nearly four hundred dollars. We likewise felt severely the loss of scholars, as well as of the means of support. But never discouraged, though often desponding; never reviling, though often persecuted, we cast our cares on Him, 'Who careth for us;' and are now rising from our partial overthrow. When one source of revenue was dried up, another seems to have opened. Our Heavenly Father, blessed be His name, knows our necessities; especially the need we have of 'the continual dew of His blessing,' and has enabled us to 'ask in faith believing;' and we give Him praise, that He has often answered our prayers. The spiritual welfare of our charge is much nearer our hearts, than the temporal concerns of the society." Happy frame of simple confidence in an ever present, and faithful God! Faith like this can never fail: exertions sustained by it, can never tire. His bosom was

not indeed, entirely exempt from the agitations of grief, anxieties and disappointment; nor was it desirable in this state of exertion, that it should be: but the anchor of his hopes was cast deep within the veil, and secured to his mind that perfect 'peace which passes all understanding;' and which 'the world can neither give nor take away.' He had suffered with the same equanimity, a still more painful frustration of his hopes in the dissolution of the school for black adults, a few months before. The opposition made to the instruction of these forlorn people on various pretexts, had proved too violent to render it advisable any longer to persist in the attempt; and it had been accordingly relinquished.

In the benevolent cause of Sunday schools, it has been seen that he spared no exertions in his power to employ. They were indeed at one period too great either for his health, or for the proper discharge of his more secular duties. The possibility of erring on this ground, was however, seasonably perceived by himself, and led to a more proportionate distribution of his time among the various duties of his station. But the fact requires to be distinctly stated, as suggesting considerations of great practical importance, that more than the whole amount of time spent in these labours, was redeemed from the imperceptible waste which mere indolence, or unprofitable engagements had formerly caused in that invaluable talent! His pecuniary

contributions are known to have been numerous, and liberal. But their full amount, will not be revealed until the day when all secrets are to be disclosed, and good works receive their infinite reward.

But no single species of the fruits of so exalted a piety, can flourish and ripen alone. In the very constitution of the society which animated and directed the efforts made in the cause of Sunday schools, distinct provision had been made for the circulation of the scriptures, and religious tracts. And both these efficient auxiliaries of the work, were employed with the happiest effects. Several instances might be related, of the obvious instrumentality of the tracts circulated in every part of the county, in conjunction with the establishment of schools, in reforming the vicious, 'converting the sinner from the error of his ways, and hiding a multitude of sins.' Of a little tract entitled "Three Dialogues," from its contents, he observed, "It has been the means of stopping a persecution which had been raised against a good Sunday school teacher. It fell into the hands of a mere moralist, who supposed his correct deportment would save his soul. The tract alarmed him: and thinking he must do something for the persecuted christians in his neighbourhood, he went to a leader of the opposition and told him, that '*he* might well be alarmed, since even himself had become so on reading that tract.' The

persecutor admitted, if so good a man, as his moral neighbour, had begun to think himself wrong, and the praying people right, there might be some truth in what those people said; and he would let them alone." The tracts presented as premiums to the children were commonly read by their parents, and often produced impressions on their minds of a salutary character.

In the conclusion of this connected view of Mr. Bacon's engagements in these arduous services, it is due to the fidelity of his divine Lord and Master, and proper for the encouragement of all who shall imitate his example, to state that he found in his labours a *present* reward, surpassing his boldest petitions, and nearly precluding the perception of his heaviest trials. The economy of divine providence in this respect, seems to be nearly uniform. The most faithful and laborious of the Lord's servants are refreshed with the richest consolations of the gospel, even in the midst of their labours. Mr. Bacon realised a large reward in knowing himself to be the instrument of gathering much immediate 'fruit to life eternal.' A number of souls were brought to sincere repentance, and saved from their sins, 'by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost,' through his direct instrumentality. A still greater number were introduced into the same holy state by the medium of the institutions which he had been principally active in forming, and the means of grace

which had through these means, been placed within their reach. He witnessed likewise, in the more general effects of the system, a visible improvement of the moral habits, and the religious condition of the many hundreds of immortals, connected with the schools; and in a still fainter degree, of the whole districts over which they extended. He realised moreover, the holy satisfaction of perceiving that many of his prayers for spiritual and other blessings, personal and general, were expressly answered: and that the whole cause was the especial care of the infinite God, 'whom unseen, he' constantly 'loved,' worshipped, and communed with. He enjoyed the testimony of his own conscience, and the witness of the divine Spirit in his heart, that he was doing the will of God, and acting with his approbation. 'It was God that justified' both him and his work: 'and who was he that could condemn?' But there are spiritual communications of a higher and richer order, made to the faithful servants of the Redeemer, even in the present world; consisting in the direct, and abundant out-pouring of those ineffable comforts of his grace, that form the most perfect foretaste of Heaven itself which the human mind is capable of realising on earth. These effusions of the divine Spirit are not always essential to the sanctification of the soul: they are scarcely tasted in this world, by many of the sincere and humble followers of the Lamb; but are seldom with-

held entirely from those who devote the whole soul, and voluntarily incur painful sacrifices, in his service. They are at once a divine attestation of approbation to eminent fidelity, and one of the most animating motives to more vigorous advances, and unwearied perseverance. A few extracts from Mr. Bacon's private diary, will furnish the most intelligible illustration of this peculiar privilege of the faithful believer, and furnish an additional testimony of the goodness and faithfulness of the God whom he serves, in repaying into his bosom 'an hundred fold' for all he can resign or suffer in obedience to his commands, 'in the present life;' without impairing his title to the 'life everlasting.'

"November 1st, 1818, Sunday.—To day I superintended the Sunday school in York. There were present, about one hundred and ninety scholars and a sufficient number of teachers. I received an unspeakable blessing; being several times so filled with holy joy that I could hardly refrain from proclaiming it aloud. This school is a glorious vineyard. Oh that God would continue to help! I have ever thought from the first, that it would be the means of a revival of religion in York, if we are faithful to our trust. The members 'go forth into the streets and lanes of the city' and into the 'highways and hedges,' and compel, by affection and entreaty, the 'poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind' to 'come in;' and 'still there is room.'"

"November 22d.—Have good reason to believe, that among the persons truly converted to God, during the week past, are five Sunday school scholars. Two others are convinced of their ruined state, and deeply distressed. Thanks be to God for his glorious work. Oh that he would multiply the victories of his grace and love, until they reach the ends of the earth!"

"January 17th, 1819.—Dillsburg. Came from York to this place yesterday, to meet the people and form a Sunday school. We were obliged to struggle with many discouragements; but through the goodness of God, succeeded. I felt his presence, and am sensible that he blest his own cause through my instrumentality. At night, met a few devout souls of the place, in a prayer meeting. We had a season of blessings. Oh the joy of communion with God! Oh his unspeakable goodness!"

"January 24th.—Yesterday, I gave a full explanation to my ***** brethern, of my conduct in relation to the schools; which satisfied them, and restored christian harmony between us. I do sincerely love them as brethern in Christ Jesus. The reconciliation was followed with a present and a precious blessing, to my soul. To day,—at morning prayer, in church, and at the Sunday school, I drank largely of the consolations of the Holy Spirit; and had much freedom of intercourse with God. My spirit

wrestles with him for sanctifying grace. Oh that God would make me wholly his own!"

"January 31st.—Was at the * * * * school in the morning. Addressed the audience and the scholars; returned at one o'clock, to the York school. I became much exhausted; am convinced I ought not to go so long without food, as I frequently do on the Sabbath. Oh I feel these schools a burden to my body; but not to my soul! My body is weak:—but God blesses my soul. I have much of his sensible presence, and am willing to suffer on, my three score years, or less or more, as it pleases him. God is good. God is love. Oh that God would bless me still more and more;—that he would bless me now,—I have such an hungering and thirsting after his righteousness!"

"February 22d.—For three days past I have been entirely occupied in travelling through different parts of the county, and forming new schools. I last night, found my exertions during the day had nearly destroyed me—and was even apprehensive that I should not be able to survive 'till the morning. To day,—my strength is considerably restored. This evening in prayer meeting, realised a foretaste of Heaven indeed. Such an out-pouring of blessings I have scarcely ever known before."

"March 30th. Since the 5th of the present month, my Sabbaths have been spent in our Sunday schools, and have been uniformly bless-

ed to my comfort and edification. The labour has been severe; but soul and body have been abundantly sustained: for which, I here record my thanks to God."

"July 18th, 1819.—During the past month, I was much occupied in visiting distant schools, and had a laborious season. But while abroad, I was always happy,—filled with zeal and love; although now conscious of having been unfaithful. In this way God was pleased to afford me support and help when labouring in his name, and for the advancement of his cause."

Under date of November 28th, 1819, Mr. Bacon has the following entry in his journal.

"Our Board of Managers met this evening for the transaction of much interesting business. I have often felt the want of something appropriate to sing on these occasions, and to day drew up the following lines." They are here inserted, as closely connected with the subject of this chapter, and in some measure, illustrative of it. In the devout and evangelical spirit which they breathe, consists their principal merit.

"HYMN,
For the Meeting of Sunday school Managers."

"Here, Saviour, let us take
Fresh counsel, at thy feet;
And by thy Spirit's presence, make
Our souls *in one* to meet.—

Here, guide us by thy word,
And by thy Spirit too :
Give hearts to know thy will, O Lord ;
Give willing hands to do.

Be thou the mind to plan,
Be thou the mouth to speak ;
And while thy great designs we scan,
Oh ! keep our spirits meek.

Lord, give us *all* thy mind ;
For *less* will not suffice ;
That we may leave our sins behind,
And daily upward rise.—

In faith we'll plant the seed,
And water with our tears ;
Christ then will bid the increase speed,
And banish all our fears."

CHAP. VI.

The connected view afforded in the foregoing chapter, of Mr. Bacon's engagements in the cause of Sunday schools, required a considerable anticipation of the period to which the narrative now, properly reverts.

In May and June, 1817, it appears from a memorandum found among his papers, that Mr. Bacon was engaged in the organisation of an independent military corps, for the county of York; and during the following season, he continued to discharge the duties which an official appointment in that service, devolved upon him. In August, of the same season, finding that the multifarious business of his profession, by exposing him to the almost constant collision of the worst passions, and most sinister transactions of the irreligious and worldly, tended unavoidably to distract his thoughts and impede his progress in spiritual life; he entered into an arrangement for abandoning the business altogether. In this proceeding he doubtless had his eye on the apostolic advice, 'I would have you without carefulness.' His motives were perhaps, more to be commended than his judgment; and he was possibly, influenced more by disgust for the lawful business of life, which he ought to have overcome, than by an enlightened estimate of its

duties. At this date, his intention to devote his life to the ministry seems to have been embarrassed with fewer scruples than occurred on a further examination of the question. But the providence of Heaven, in a dispensation which could not easily be misinterpreted or evaded, absolutely overruled this purpose; and he continued in the practice of the law for nearly two years afterwards; fully satisfied, that in whatever way his divine Master might intend to dispose of his services at a future period, it was his pleasure that he should, at present, continue to exercise his profession, and glorify him in the faithful discharge of humbler duties. But his thoughts were incessantly revolving the subject; and he ventured in a few weeks to offer his name to the Bishop of the Diocese, to be entered on the list of candidates for orders In this act he was conscious of proceeding with due circumspection; but was still, undecided, as to the ulterior course, which the intimations of providence might afterwards require him to take.

The whole of Mr. Bacon's time, not spent in the necessary business of his office, and at the bar, became towards the latter end of the year, not only engrossed, but overcharged both with stated and occasional religious exercises performed either for his own improvement, or for the salvation of others.

Mr. Bacon eminently exemplified in the altered course of his life, the inspired description of those in regard to whom, 'old things' are said 'to have passed away, and all things' to have 'become new:' but this characteristic of the child of God was in nothing more unequivocally evinced than in the exact distribution, and entirely new appropriation of the several divisions of his time. No talent, with the improvement of which we are charged, excepting only the means of salvation directly connected with our redemption and sanctification, is more valuable, or capable of being applied to a higher use than this. The different duties to which the hours of every day were successively consecrated, and the means by which his early progress in grace was so remarkably accelerated, are exhibited in a form of rules constructed on truly christian principles, which he adopted on the first of October, 1817. He entitles them,

"Rules to be observed every day, by S. Bacon, attorney at law:

"Rise at six from October to March; and from April to September, at five. Ill health and a habit of study require this degree of indulgence. Earlier rising would be injurious to me.

"Attend to morning devotion.

"Pay the proper attention to my personal comfort and appearance; and breakfast.

"Examine my day-book and docket, for the business of the day.

"Attend diligently to official business and legal studies during the day;—taking care to dine lightly, drink nothing but water, and maintain constantly, a watchful and praying spirit; to 'rejoice ever-more, pray without ceasing and in every thing give thanks.' Religion is not to make me neglect my business, but do it with more fidelity and diligence.

"Take very little or no supper; as it is apt to cloud the mind, and hinder the life of my evening devotions.

"After supper, attend in my office till seven o'clock, to any remaining business, and close the worldly concerns of the day; taking care 'to have a place in my office for every thing; and every thing in its place.'

"At seven o'clock, go to some place of social prayer or worship. This let me do, because we are exhorted not to forsake the assembling 'of ourselves together:' and because I find, by experience, that those who thus 'wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.' Let me never attend these meetings because I think myself better than my neighbours, but to implore my Father in Heaven to preserve me from yielding to the temptations which surround me, and which abound within me.

"Return to my lodgings, and spend the remainder of the evening in reading and meditation.

"Attend to my evening devotion.

"Finally, never let me permit a known duty to be omitted; and let me do all the good I can. Even amidst the business of the day, I find time to do much for the benefit of myself and others; but often want the *mind* and *means*. Let me constantly pray for both."

The Bible was his constant companion; and its study filled up nearly all those short and broken intervals of time, which the most systematic routine of duties will always leave unoccupied. Every charitable association with which he was connected, furnished, in the necessary meetings of its members, frequent occasions of social prayer and praise; which he seldom suffered to pass without due improvement. Hence, the different charities, in the promotion of some, or all of which, a large proportion of the respectable individuals of the place were united, became strongly associated in their minds, with the holiest services, and the highest considerations of religion. His humility, aided by an enlightened knowledge of the duties of christians in different relations, effectually restrained him, from invading the sphere exclusively alloted by the Divine Head of the church, to his commissioned ministers. His circumspection and tenderness of conscience, even while actuated by the most ardent zeal, and, in the exercise of his characteristic energy prosecuting the most difficult services, were such as seldom to furnish

even a plausible pretext for offence or reprehension, to his most vigilant opposers. His example in this respect how worthy, and yet how difficult, of imitation! Few have accomplished, in so short a time, and at so early a period of their religious life, so much good: and vastly fewer have been happy enough not to neutralise or reverse much of the good they have effected, by a larger mixture of indiscretion. This fact is the more remarkable, as Mr. Bacon's temperament was ardent in the extreme; and he seldom suffered the time exactly proper for acting, to pass unimproved. But the true reason of his happiness in this respect, is explained by another fact, from which the same result may always be anticipated. Mr. Bacon 'committed all his ways to the Lord;' even the particular details of his engagements, secular and religious, were faithfully commended to the divine blessing. He knew it to be the privilege of believers, to be directed in all their paths, by the unerring guidance of the holy Spirit. This privilege he humbly embraced; and his confidence was never disappointed.

From the date of his conversion, to his death, Mr. Bacon's health was delicate; but owing to the peculiar organisation of his system, he was able always to recover after a short repose, from a state of almost entire exhaustion of body and mind, and seldom did he engage in any service for the honour of God, or the good of men

which admitted sufficient scope for exertion, without proceeding to the utmost limit of his strength. To this cause is to be traced in a principal degree, the occasional prevalence of the imagination over the soberer faculties of the mind, manifested in his speculations on several of the incidents of his religious experience. A sound body is essentially necessary to the exact and regular exercise of the nicely balanced mechanism of the understanding: and of this blessing Mr. Bacon was at the present time deprived. But it may be said in justice to his character, and in truth, that no man's piety was of a more *rational* kind than that which he habitually displayed, after a few months' experience had worn away the novelty of a religious life. The practical principles of few christians were more exactly ascertained to themselves, or their judgment better enlightened by the lessons of revelation, or more cautiously exercised on every question of duty, than his. He might perhaps, unnecessarily call up to his recollection the shapeless images of a dream that were better forgotten; and might borrow from it instruction that were better derived from other sources. But even this infirmity was, to say the least, innocent in its effects,—it might to him, have proved even a beneficial one. 'His dreams,' he appears to have 'told as dreams;' and never in the least to have confounded their fancied interpretations with the predictions of prophecy, or the

authority of the word of God. Even of his dreams it may be said, that they evince the strong and prevailing influence of pious feelings in his mind. Happy for those who would too severely censure this fault, rather of a disordered body than mind, if their own thoughts and affections are, like his, so habitually given to their Saviour and to celestial themes, that the imagination shall retain its hold upon them, when that is the only faculty which wakes in the sleeping soul! He occasionally exhibited a similar propensity which is easily traced to the same causes, to fancy himself the subject of waking visions, and supernatural impressions. But it is not known that his judgment, except in two or three instances, became the sport of illusions of this nature; and those occurred in the earlier stages of his religious experience, when it was more difficult to separate the actings of grace, from the impressions of the fancy.*

On a visit to Philadelphia in May, 1818, as a delegate to the convention of the Episcopal church of the diocese, either through mere depression of spirits, or from the influence of probably, very insufficient reasons, he was nearly induced to withdraw his name from the list of theological candidates. This intention was, however, overruled by the very seasonable advice of two of his clerical friends, to whom he com-

* See Appendix, Note VI.

municated his scruples. "I rejoice," he remarks, in reference to his conduct on this occasion, "that I did not take my own way: and from this period I was more and more confirmed in my purpose to enter the ministry."

During the summer, a small portion only of his time was devoted to the study of systematic theology. But his rapid advancement in a practical acquaintance with the scriptures, and the important science of experimental religion, more than compensated his want of opportunity for more abstract studies. He learnt in what manner to offer the prayer of faith, to obtain the victory over the world, to mortify the corruptions of his nature, and copy into his life the example of his Lord. Nor was his light 'hid under a bushel.' He 'glorified his heavenly Father,' by an unstudied but conspicuous exhibition in his own character, of the power of his grace. A number of souls were evidently turned 'from darkness to light,' by his means, during this period; and rich and numerous were the blessings, which through his exhortations, and prayers, were communicated to the little flock of believers who formed his chosen, and principal associates. In a letter dated October 15th, he writes to a confidential christian friend, "My cup is full to overflowing. Help me to praise my merciful Saviour. A brother of mine lately visited me. He was a confirmed deist. Being older than myself, I neglected, for some

time, to invite him to our stated prayer meetings, fearing the ridicule of sacred things which might be expected from his satirical tongue. But a sense of duty compelled me at length to take him along. We went into meeting : in prayer, he was the only one present who stood. He kept his position as erect as a post ; until, as I was kneeling near him, I pulled him by the coat, and he came upon his knees.—God not only gave me utterance, but enabled me to wrestle in faith for his salvation. The next morning he came very early into my room, begging me to pray for him. I did so ; and kept him with me about twelve days. In the mean time he was born both, ' of the *water* and of the *Spirit*.' He partook of the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper, and has left *me*, and all his *sins* behind."

The brother referred to in this extract, has since exhibited a life of consistent piety, and been usefully employed in a public capacity, on the coast of Africa.

Mr. Bacon's engagements during the remainder of the autumn and winter, continued much of the same character as for the last preceding half year. But, having resolved on drawing his secular concerns to a close as soon as possible, and devoting the residue of his life to the work of the sanctuary, he much better sustained the character of an intrepid and indefatigable evangelist, during this period, than that of the

profession which he was shortly to lay aside. He had associated with him, a gentleman of the bar, into whose hands he gradually relinquished the extensive practice which he formerly had in the county. In this period he made several ineffectual attempts to redeem, from the exactions of his secular business, a few weeks, at least, to be employed in the retired and uninterrupted study of theology. But the cause of christian benevolence in various forms, preferred such numerous and pressing demands on his exertions, and his counsel, as wholly to fill up the intervals of his leisure from more secular duties: and, until the ensuing month of May, he had not advanced beyond the threshold of theological reading. During the winter of 1818—19, and the ensuing spring, he seldom devoted less than three days in the week to the formation and superintendence of Sabbath schools. The month of May was passed in Philadelphia; where, by changing the scene of his labours, and varying their customary routine, he regained a better habit of health than he had before enjoyed since the commencement of his religious life. The acquaintance which, during this season, he cultivated with an extensive circle of humble and devoted christians, for which that city is pre-eminently distinguished, proved, in many respects, serviceable to him. It cemented with souls of congenial character and feelings, an union, and laid the foundation for a future correspondence

which often in his subsequent labours and trials, greatly assisted to sustain his weary hands, and animate his drooping spirits. He learnt at the same time, to discriminate more accurately between mere animal emotions and the kindlings of the imagination, and those pure and sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God on the mind, which like a deep and perennial fountain, 'spring up in the soul, to life everlasting.' He returned to York about the first of June.

Soon afterwards, he drew up, and published in the Gazettes of York, a series of essays explanatory of the objects of the American Colonization Society, with a special view to its vindication from the exceptions which had been expressed by many, even of the friends of the black population of this country. Mr. Bacon had for several years, been a useful member of the Abolition Society of Pennsylvania. His benevolence was, however, of too disinterested a character to suffer him to withhold from any good cause, the support and patronage which he could afford it. At an early period of the operations of the Colonization Society, he perceived that their measures were inspired by the same philanthrophic principle as those of the Abolition Society; and conceived them to be much more practicable, more systematic, and equally expansive in their final objects. He perceived likewise, that these objects were not well understood even by his brethren of the Pennsylvania Society; and

that many prejudices existed which had their foundation wholly in this ignorance. His essays were therefore very seasonable, and happily adapted to accomplish the ends of the writer. It was unfortunate that the imperfections of their style, owing to the haste employed in their production, tended to restrict their publication to more circumscribed limits than from the facts which they embodied, and the soundness of the reasoning, they deserved.

The months of June and July, were passed in York with fewer interruptions to his theological studies either from business or charitable engagements, than any former period. The sacred scriptures formed the principal object of his attention at this time; and the course of his reading on other subjects in divinity, although limited, was in conformity to the regulations of the canons, and of the House of bishops of the Protestant Episcopal church, and pursued under the particular direction of the Rev. Professor Turner, of the General Theological Seminary, who spent several months of this summer in Philadelphia. His extreme anxiety, to bring himself to the sacred work as one that 'needs not to be ashamed;' his incessant and earnest cries for the teachings of the divine Spirit; the deep interest of his affections in all evangelical subjects; his high sense of the dignity and responsibility of the charge; and above all, the entire devotion of his soul to the pursuit of God's glory, and

the salvation of men, stimulated his progress in these preparatory studies in a measure altogether surpassing that of his time or advantages. His theological knowledge may be properly regarded as consisting of a deep practical impression of the most important truths of revelation, upon his mind. It was unmixed with human theories; because derived directly from the purest of all sources: it was calculated for direct application to the highest purposes of devotion, and spiritual improvement; because sought expressly for these ends, and in the use of these very means.

In the month of August, he again repaired to Philadelphia to complete his preparations for ordination, and assume the sacred office. He had nearly disposed of all his secular connexions with the world at this time, and enjoyed in the increased abstraction of his thoughts from temporal cares and labours, a repose of soul which eminently comported with the sacredness of his pursuit, and the solemnity of the approaching scenes. He thus had the opportunity of more fully ascertaining his true motives, and of maturing his views, in devoting himself to the ministerial service, and confirming his purposes in relation to its duties. The use which he made of this opportunity, as relates to his own spiritual improvement, will be seen in the extracts which are to follow from his journal.

In the latter part of the summer of 1819, the managers of the Philadelphia Bible Society, determined to execute a purpose which they had for some time cherished, of diffusing more extensively in the interior of the state, the benefits of their institution, than they had ever attempted before. It became necessary to employ in this service, a person of peculiar qualifications. The views of the board were soon directed to Mr. Bacon, as the individual presented to their choice by the especial providence of Him to whom their prayers had been fervently addressed for the means of accomplishing their important object. His want of holy orders, and a number of obligations of a secular nature, appeared to himself and others, for a time, to present an impassable obstacle to his engaging in this mission. But the last were removed in a way so clearly providential, as to induce a very serious inquiry whether it had not become a duty to apply for ordination at an earlier period than he had before thought compatible with a due preparation for the ministerial office. After seriously weighing the important question, he resolved to submit himself to the examination and advice of the clerical committee on whose certificate the Bishop of the diocese was to act, in conferring ordination on theological candidates. This examination he sustained to the satisfaction of the committee, in the beginning of September, and was admitted to holy orders by the Right Rev.

Bishop White, of the diocese of Pennsylvania, on the fifth of the same month.

In October of 1818, Mr. Bacon had commenced, as a means of his private improvement, a religious diary; which was continued until his ordination, without much interruption; and, with more frequent intervals, from that time to the commencement of his last illness. The utility of this practice has been doubted; but certainly, on insufficient grounds. A religious journal may indeed, be the offspring of spiritual pride, and the instrument of religious vanity. And which of the means of grace may not be corrupted by the same motives? But growth in grace is always aided by experience. And the chief advantage of a religious diary, as a means of spiritual improvement consists in its effect to fix more permanently in the memory and impress more effectually on the heart, the lessons of experience. This advantage it possesses in a higher degree than perhaps any other means. The most exact and striking delineations of the character of eminent saints, have likewise after their decease, been drawn from this part of their writings, with great advantage to their successors in the christian warfare.

Mr. Bacon's journal seems to have been designed for the improvement or inspection of no person except himself. It was written with the most unguarded simplicity, and bears every characteristic of a most authentic registry of the

religious operations of his own mind, as it was affected by a singular variety of circumstances. So sensible did he become of the utility of the practice, that after nearly a year's experience of its advantages, he recorded an expression of regret, and self accusation for a few weeks incidental neglect of his journal. A religious diary secures at least one important end,—that of engaging the mind frequently, in reflecting on its own exercises. It likewise may have the effect to strengthen, by giving a distinct expression to the pious purposes and feelings of the heart. Both of these effects are directly connected with the growth of divine life in the soul, and the maintenance of a godly and holy life.

The first entry in his journal was made, October 28th, 1818.—The whole exhibits a gradual progress in his christian experience, from the untutored ardour of the young convert's first love, to its comparative maturity in a habit of devout affection, as pure as it was elevated.

Prayer has been significantly styled the natural respiration of the new-born soul; and the gently distilling influence of the divine Spirit, the etherial element on which it habitually feeds. The subject of this memoir has been seen in a laborious, but ineffectual struggle with the opposing principles of his nature, to hold himself to the stated performance of this duty, even after long and frequent intervals of its allowed neglect. But now the holy work proceeds almost without

constraint, or interruption. Nearly every expression of his feelings is blended with a fervent invocation to the author of all spiritual influences, for an increase of those very desires which prompts his petitions. Communion with God, through his Son, and by the Holy Spirit,* is now the most delightful, and therefore an uniform exercise of the soul. It is the highest end to which it aspires, and an employment, in which could it be wholly absorbed, it would repose its tired energies with inconceivable delight.

If among so many qualities peculiarly christian as Mr. Bacon exhibited in his character, any one shone with pre-eminent lustre, it must be referred to the spirit of prayer, which constantly informed his whole soul. Prayer was the first employment of his waking mind in the morning; and the last of his weary thoughts, at night. So entirely wrought into the frame and habit of prayer, were the affections of his heart, that they seemed to pursue their accustomed employment, when sleep had entirely suspended the functions of the bodily senses. "I have remarked," he states, in putting down the results of his short experience on this subject, "that whenever I fall asleep at night in the exercise of a holy praying spirit, my soul prays through the whole night! Happy slumbers! There is little in them of that deep, death-like stupor which formerly char-

* Eph. II, 18.

acterised my sleep; but while all the purposes of sleep as to the refreshment of body and mind, are answered, I am still sufficiently awake to hold communion with God. Oh that my soul may be confirmed in this happy frame!" On another occasion:—"In answer to prayer, I arose this morning with a praying mind. For this blessing I earnestly entreated God, on retiring to rest. Even my sleep was a season of prayer." This blessed influence rested, in the same degree on his mind, through a season of severe trial arising from the perplexing cares of the ensuing day.

Mr. Bacon was so highly favoured of his heavenly Father, as not only to receive all his providential dispensations with filial submission and gratitude; but to be able to see the direct connexion of most of his comforts, and many of his chastisements either with his faithful performance or his neglect, of this duty. November 14th, he thus writes: "I have been absent for several days in the interior. A consciousness of having neglected my duty towards my dying friend * * * * * embittered my mind. It was my earnest prayer, that we might both be suffered to meet again. God is good, and spared me to return, and find him still alive, and apparently not so near his end as I expected. I repaired to his chamber, and spent a solemn season of prayer and earnest conversation with him. He feels his need of a Saviour, and is earnest about his

soul's welfare. He appears in a good degree resigned. May God have mercy on him, and save his soul." On bringing his professional business to a final close in the summer of 1819, he has the following entries in his journal:

"July 14th. I am waiting in earnest prayer for the Lord to help me. I have used all the means in my power to extricate myself from this last pressure of my temporal affairs; which alone appears to detain me in my present situation. But my own providence and exertions can help me no further. I know not what way to turn myself—may the Lord disperse the cloud which hangs over my future path.

"July 20th. To day, a most unexpected deliverance has been wrought for me. A gentleman of Philadelphia has voluntarily advanced me seven hundred dollars to enable me to leave the place, and enter immediately on the prosecution of the important agency to which I have been appointed. This indeed was least expected! How soon the cloud has been broken—is dispersed—is gone! All is plain before me. To what wonderful interpositions will not the Lord sometimes condescend, in order to convince us, that if we will trust him, he will help and protect us!"

Mr. Bacon took great delight in social prayer and praise:—a privilege which he ever thought nearly connected with his comfort, and advancement in the christian life. The fervour of his af-

fections seemed on these occasions, to be assisted by the gentle excitement which the presence of his christian friends supplied; without feeling the restraint which a large promiscuous assembly, and a more formal order of worship would be likely to produce. These seasons were sought and enjoyed almost every day. Often had he occasion to record in his diary a thankful memorial of the abundant blessings there dispensed to his own soul, and to his friends.

It was natural that a person so constituted as Mr. Bacon, should, in the commencement of his christian experience, not only be strongly susceptible himself to the impressions of external excitements, but measure the good feelings of others too much by the strength of their mere animal emotions. Hence, he sometimes complained of the "deadness" of himself and his brethren, when few "sighs" and "tears," and external "expressions of rejoicing," were excited in their social meetings. None has a right to forbid these manifestations of pious feeling: for strong internal sensations, whatever may be their nature or cause, are necessarily productive of visible emotions: and it fully accords both with the scriptures and enlightened reason, to believe that the Spirit of Christ can produce in the minds of his people, stronger and more affecting sensations of love, rejoicing and desire, than any other inferior cause. The danger is in making bodily emotions the *test* of holy feeling, and aiming

rather to move the animal spirits, than to implant and invigorate holy dispositions in the mind. The Spirit of God, without whose direct agency there can be no right feelings or desires in the heart, has his seat deep in the recesses of the soul: and before he animates the affections, it should always be remembered, that he sanctifies them; and all his blessed operations tend more to the destruction of sin, than to the production of present rapture. But both effects result, to a certain extent, from the same divine influence. Hence the command to "rejoice evermore;" and among the enumerated fruits of the spirit, are "love, joy, peace." "The kingdom of Heaven is not only righteousness," but "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."—Mr. Bacon has occasion in relation to these means of grace, to say at one time, "At our morning prayer meeting, I felt the Lord present to assist us all. In the evening service, God was likewise there with his blessing." On another occasion; "At evening prayer meeting," "a goodly company was assembled. But there was little life: no tears, no sighs, and almost no rejoicing. I had great enlargement of desire and expression in prayer." Soon after: "I was not at our little meeting to night. I regret it. I want food—and even hunger and thirst for the bread and waters of life." Again: at "social prayer meeting this night, I enjoyed a refreshing repast. In prayer and exhortation my feelings and desires were

carried strongly upwards in an unusual degree. Bless God, O my soul, for all his goodness." Two days afterwards: "met the little praying circle at * * * * * * God gave me grace to press the invitations of his gospel on the attention of the Christless. Oh he is good to them! He is good to me! To his name be all glory."—"In church this evening," he again states, "the season was precious,—most comforting to myself,—and profitable, I have reason to believe to many others. Some hard hearts certainly relented; I hope were broken, for sin."—"In singing the lines

> 'On wings of faith my soul shall fly,
> Nor tire amidst the heavenly road,'

my mind was filled with a rich flow of consolation." On another occasion he states, "This evening I heard * * * * * * preach. He appeared animated with the spirit of grace. The season was more than happy, it was a glorious one. The power of the most High seemed to rest on the congregation. Some souls I fully believe will long remember the time.—May God be praised."

Mr. Bacon never perceived that he spent a greater proportion of his time in attendance on these social and public exercises of devotion than his own improvement and that of his friends, demanded. And on that question he was better able to judge and decide correctly, than any other person. But he was by no means insensible of the

need of circumspection and vigilance, in guarding against the peculiar dangers from which not even these nurseries of prayer, and holy affections, were exempt. The very light which they helped to kindle in his mind, discovered to him the necessity of employing in conjunction with them, other means of growing in grace, and attaining to that state of holiness which is the high mark of every genuine christian. The succeeding extracts will well illustrate this exalting trait of his christian experience.

"December 18th. I last night, before retiring to bed, had unusual comfort in private prayer, and reading the scriptures. Oh that God would deliver me from inbred corruptions! My greatest desire is for more enlargement and faith, in private devotion. But languor and insensibility, in too great a degree, succeeded. This spiritual deadness, in private—especially in private devotion, is alarming. I detect in myself a crying inconsistency. Often have I felt a flow of love, and comfort, in social devotion, and at the same time, not in private. This I attribute, partly, to my attending prayer meetings every night, and often leading in the exercises; when I in a manner, exhaust my supplications, and have no more to ask. But private prayer is most profitable,—God grant it may prove to me the most delightful duty." Again: "I thank God I am getting to feel the same de-

light in private prayer, and the study of the Bible, which I formerly possessed."

The praying christian is always stimulated to perseverance in this duty, by a strong desire after the holy comforts of divine grace. Such was manifestly a constant motive of his ardent supplications, in the mind of Mr Bacon. But a cause no less universal, and no less effectual, is the deep and increasing consciousness which every regenerate soul possesses, of the power of indwelling sin, the misleading tendency of many of his perverse habits, and the humbling nature and number of his bodily, mental and spiritual infirmities. A sense of misery, and the want of instant help, perhaps extorts every sinner's first cries to God for mercy. And after mercy is obtained, and the soul enjoys a heavenly peace in believing, the sense of inbred corruption, instead of being removed, is heightened:—nay, the evil is then, indeed, first seen in its extent; and the dependence of the soul on the influences of the holy Spirit, for health and salvation, first felt as it should be. Let the work of sanctification proceed to any degree of earthly perfection: the eye of the understanding will be proportionably freed from its natural dimness, and enabled still to perceive new proofs of unsanctified desires, and new traits of the alienation of the soul from God. The evidence, therefore, of a regenerate heart, and of an advanced state of spiritual improvement which the

believer must be expected to exhibit, is rather to be sought in an increasing sense of his unworthiness and imperfections, than in the silence of his complaints, and confessions, on account of these evils. Mr. Bacon's complaints on this ground were loud and frequent. The mental anguish which he sometimes endured from a deep sense of sinfulness, required the strong supports of that grace which he possessed, to prevent him from sinking under the burden.* He was diligent, and through a constant 'supply of the Spirit of grace,' in a good degree faithful, in keeping his heart. His affections arising from the temptations of business, and the conviction of much imperfection in his best obedience to the law of Christ, constantly increased the measure of his experience, and led on his mind to new and stronger efforts of faith, and formed it to a more confirmed habit of christian patience. The passages in his journal which follow, explain the exercises of his mind under these various exigencies of his religious experience, during a few of the latter months of his residence in York.

"October 26th, 1818. I was this day deeply engaged in my secular business: but was habitually sensible of the presence, and love of God. My heart was, however, drawn in several

* "The burden of our sins is intolerable."—*Communion Service, intended for the use of converted persons.*

instances, towards the earth. Once or twice my besetting infirmity, fretfulness, and impatience, discovered itself. This I know to be exceedingly displeasing to God, and pray that he would give me grace to overcome it. I desire to do in all my conduct just as my Saviour himself would have done. That sweet, mild, affectionate, patient, holy temper of mind:—Oh! I want it."—"This day I fear has proved an unprofitable one. How unfaithful! how unguarded have I been! O God, I beseech thee in the name of Jesus Christ, to sanctify my soul, and take away these remnants of my corrupt nature."

"October 27th. Still unfaithful to my God. I find when business presses, and I become thoroughly immersed in it, I lose all lively sensibility of the divine presence. I lose my praying frame of mind. To what changes am I hourly liable!"

"October 28th. Oh, the corruptions of my nature! my most earnest prayer is to be set free from them. I pray for sanctifying grace. I have this day imbibed too freely, alas! the spirit of the world; and lost much of the holy joy which I possessed a very few days ago. Before repairing to the place of prayer, this evening, I resolved to recover with God's help, the lost blessing. I have wrestled for it, and can be satisfied with nothing but Jesus Christ, and him crucified. O God, slay this propensity to sin, and offend thee, and fill me with the Holy

Ghost. My soul pants after full, free, present salvation. Keep me faithful unto death; I feel how fatal is a single hour's neglect of watchfulness. Yet the Lord is gracious, and ready at all times, to receive my sorrowing soul back to his love."

"October 29th. I perceive, on reviewing the exercises of my mind the past day, that my whole heart, and soul, and strength, has not returned to Jesus Christ. It is not many days since my soul was raised above the earth, and stretching still upward towards the heights of salvation; filled with holy joy, using every opportunity to bring sinners back to God, longing for, and fully bent on the work of the ministry. I was so entirely rapt with the sweet theme of salvation, that nothing else could give me pleasure. My professional business was tasteless, and almost odious to me. Last Monday, commenced the county sessions. I tore my mind from the loved subject, and devoted it to my causes in court. A few hours' neglect of watchfulness, only, intervened, and my joy and comfort fled. I was not sensible of my loss, until like Samson, I awoke and began as usual to exercise my strength, and found, to my sorrow, it was gone. I had, through grace, felt myself a Samson with his hair at its full length. I now am a Samson shorn. No longer ago than last Sunday, my soul was borne along on the full tide of love and glory: only four days have

elapsed and I am heavy, motionless, and unfit for Heaven. O my God, help me I beseech thee! I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ."

"October 31st. I feel sensibly at a distance from my God: and am struggling against a host of corruptions, to approach nearer. I hunger, and am not satisfied. I thirst, yet cannot drink. My spirits are ruffled; and I am far from enjoying that calm repose of soul, which I lately found in leaning by faith on my Saviour. One cause of the disturbance of my feelings I think I understand. I lately visited some christian friends, whose manners did not accord with my spirit. One exhibited a lightness of deportment,—and that disturbed me. Another was affected,—and that disturbed me. A third was apparently indifferent to the interests of religion altogether, that tried my patience. O God, help us all to overcome our weaknesses and infirmities. While I pray that the levity of the one, the affectation of another, and the coldness of a third, may be removed, let me pray that the peevishness of my own vile and abominable heart may be removed also."

"November 2d. During the whole of this day I was thronged with business of the most perplexing nature,—so much so that I had no time to eat. Yet my passions were bound and subdued by the power of grace. God was my Almighty Helper, through the day. My engagements continued nearly throughout the night.

Oh what do I owe God for so good a religion! It is good at all times, in all places, for all men."

"November 3d. This day I was so much exhausted with my labours that I nearly fainted. At night, business seemed a little to intermit, and I went to the prayer meeting. Weak in body, fainting in spirit. Oh, my wants were many!—yet my soul had been happy through the day, except that the fountain of corruptions was stirred, once or twice; and I was much tried by it. I joined in a prayer that was offered for purifying grace, and for strength and health; and actually received all I asked for, before I left the house. Oh how refreshed even in body I was; and in soul, how strengthened! I came home prepared to endure my fatiguing labours with alacrity. Glory to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, ever, world without end."

"November 4th. Business was such to day as almost to overcome my bodily strength: but I still found amidst all my hurry, an occasional moment for spiritual reflection and ejaculatory prayer. I attended meeting at night, and found it good to be there. My soul cries out still, for sanctifying grace, and desires to be constantly moving onward towards the prize of her high calling. When I hear my friends making excuses for absenting themselves from social payer meetings, on the ground of wanting time, I cannot help thinking that their want of a desire hinders them more than a want of time. Amidst all my busi-

ness, as Attorney for the commonwealth, during a week of quarter sessions, I still find time to attend meeting almost every night. Oh the coldness, the backwardness of some professors! And their very excuses founded on such insufficient grounds, are sins.—True, I sometimes go without my dinner, and am sometimes up nearly all night; but can I not afford occasionally to exchange a trifle of perishing food for something, to sustain the soul? And may I not sometimes omit to lay my body on a place of rest, provided I can repose my soul on Jesus? Holy Father, I need a fuller supply of thy grace. And I beseech thee in the name of Jesus, to give me strength of body and soul equal to all my trials."

"November 5th. I have more than once this week, been perplexed at the dispensation of providence, in suffering the guilty to escape detection and punishment. But I desire to thank God that he has so far enlightened, as to enable me to see, that he 'ruleth in the army of Heaven above, and among the inhabitants of the earth,' and will 'cause even the wrath of men to praise him;' and that he has made me not only to perceive but to acquiesce in his government."

"November 9th. I have passed another busy day: and have been distressed with temptations to forsake the cause of Christ. These temptations I invited by the langour of my desires to cleave to his blessed interest. It was greater

than I recollect for a long time past. Yet I strive against these suggestions. At meeting, this night, I obtained some relief, and was a little excited. I pray that the good Spirit of my God may not leave me in a state of hopeless desolation. Oh may he ever keep a reclaiming hold on my wandering heart! 'Heal my backslidings' and draw me onward—save me from these temptations, and excite me to new diligence in the cause of Christ."

"November 11th. I left York for Gettysburg, indisposed in body, and cold in spirit. God has now restored the first, and warmed the latter into life. My whole journey seemed to be over-ruled by his good providence. But I was unfaithful in all my duties, and want boldness in the cause of Christ."

"November 15th. Shame, shame, is my part! I suffered myself to slumber a few minutes, under both the sermons which I attended to day; owing to my fatigue in the Sunday school. But it is a wicked—a very vile thing to sleep in church. God grant me grace to act a better part hereafter; and forgive me the past."

"November 17th. I have made very little or no perceptible progress this day in the divine life. The Lord has enabled me to resist one or two temptations; but Oh! I am most fruitless, and faithless!—I called to see poor * * * * *. He appears to be gaining strength, and I fear his soul grows worse, as his body gets better.

Thus it is. The near approach of death will make the most careless, inquisitive, often, about their salvation. But their feelings on the return of health, proclaim that they can *live* without a Saviour.—My *faith* is perhaps, less depressed to day than yesterday. But all will not do; I must have more religion."

"November 21st. God of love, grant me grace to detect and expose the arts of Satan, and of my own wicked heart; and to overcome them all through the blood and merits, and in the name, of Jesus Christ. I find lately the greatest reluctance to studying the Bible, and to private devotion. How often has Satan prevented me from reading the Bible at night! It is suggested, that 'it is late;' 'your health will suffer;' 'another time will do:'—and the same of private prayer. I do not neglect it altogether, but am so dead and lifeless in it that I hardly know what to say.—May God help me for the Saviour's sake. Amen."

"December 1st. My business was to day of a trying nature; but through grace I was carried through it without difficulty. My God assisted me. My haughty spirit was kept low."

"December 2d. On carefully reviewing the two last days, I discover much unfaithfulness. The Lord grant me a watchful,as well as praying spirit."

"December 4th. I this evening was assailed with another powerful temptation to return to

the world. But God gave me grace to resolve never to do it. Lord, preserve me faithful to the end.—I am cold in my devotions. Oh that I might draw nearer to God in heart and in life!"

"December 7th. At social worship, I did not find the Saviour precious to my soul. Yet I endeavoured to exhort others to be faithful, and sinners to repent.—The prevailing state of my mind is this: I desire to become holy, but do not strive for it as I ought. I desire to be more earnest and faithful in my private devotions, but I do not faithfully employ the means to obtain my end; I do not read my Bible enough. This is certain. May God help me to worship him better in private; to strive successfully for holiness, and to read his holy word with more fidelity."

"December 9th. Alas! My spiritual wants are numberless; and I am almost entirely destitute of faith in asking for their relief. I thank God that I can recollect his past goodness to me, when in a similar state of desolation and barrenness. He caused me to pray earnestly for a revival of his work; and heard me. My bonds were broken asunder, and my soul rejoiced in its recovered liberty. Through the whole of this day, the last spark of grace seemed to be expiring in my soul. Oh that God would raise it to a flame!—I had some sensible aid in our meeting this evening. Come, Holy Ghost; come

quickly; come and give my spirit rest—not from labour, but from sin."

"December 11th. How difficult I find it to keep my mind staid on Jesus Christ! This day I have suffered much from wandering thoughts, and wandering desires. O God, found and fix my wayward soul on the 'Rock Christ Jesus.'—My brother * * * * * is with me. It appears that I was the instrument of his conversion. But he is certainly nearer his God than I am. He is more humble, fervent, and faithful. How great a change has God wrought in him! How much has he done for us both!"

"December 28th. The court commenced. Business was urgent; but I have great reason to thank God for the aid he has afforded me in the labours of the day. Our meeting at night was a refreshing one."

"January 1st. 1819. God grant that the year which begins to day, may advance me to many new degrees of grace and holiness. I must accuse myself of great coldness: but my desires are for more warmth of affection. Oh for grace to proceed 'from strength to strength, until I appear at last in Zion, before God!'—Especially I ask for grace and strength, to pass safely through the labours and troubles of the ensuing week."

"January 4th. This day the quarter sessions commenced: it has proved to me a sore and tiresome one indeed; but God, in manifest

answer to prayer, gave me a sufficient supply of bodily and spiritual health."

"January 7th. I know I deserve the wrath of God, for the coldness of my heart, and the irritability of my disposition. It is my grief, that I am so unlike Christ. How long, Lord, how long shall my unfruitfulness, and propensity to sin, continue!"

"January 8th. Still I live without producing fruit to the glory of God. I have this day remained at a distance from him, and what is still worse, have at times felt less disposition to return to him than usual.—I find the arrangements of my business have involved me in connexions which are likely to prove a sad snare to me. I doubt much whether I did right in forming them."

"January 11th. Business is still urgent.—My faults are, a neglect of watchfulness, and of my Bible,—coldness in my private devotions,—and indulging too long, in sleep, in the morning. Against these evils, let me watch and pray with double diligence."

"January 12th. My soul is like the wintry heath. How guilty a wretch I am! How prone by nature, and how bound by habit, to sin! Bitterly do I regret that I deferred the work of religion in youth, to this period of my life! But, in vain. A life of sin and guilt is so far passed; and the best I can now hope, is to offer to God the remnants of my life, health, and facul-

ties, so long misapplied. O God, forgive thy servant, for his Saviour's sake."

"January 20th. Found an opportunity to give explanations, and attempt to conciliate the favour of some of my * ** * * brethren whose affections have been much alienated from me in consequence of the misconstruction put on some of my expressions and conduct. Through God's blessing, I partially succeeded. The most effectual means I employed were the christian's arguments,—tears and entreaties."

"January 29th. I am mercifully spared, again to record the mercies of God, and my unworthy use of them, another day. I obtained some relief from a burden which I have too long carried, in being able to weep for my sins, and those of a corrupt world.—I was yesterday, and the day before, shorn of my strength, almost imperceptibly. My soul is again toiling to reach the heights of Pisgah. Oh for a view of my promised inheritance!"

"February 2d. This day I had business to transact, in which I found the evident help and presence of God. Our devotions in the meeting for prayer, were cold and inanimate. We are all 'filled with our own ways!' The Lord have mercy on us, and save us from 'hardness of heart, and contempt of thy word and commandment.'"

"February 11th. We are altogether a cold and icy people. We want a fresh effusion of

the Holy Spirit. Many of my brethren manifest surprising indifference. I am indeed sorely disquieted for them. O Lord, send them thy salvation!"

"March 30th. For some time past, I have suffered my business too much to harrass and distract my mind. I find it sometimes, not only unpleasant, but disgusting. But this is owing to the wrong state of my heart: and at seasons, I have been able to overcome it. It was not the fault of religion, but my want of more; and neglecting to exercise proper watchfulness."—"My very profession is a snare to me. The instrument with which I exercise it, is the mind,—the very faculty in which my religion itself has its seat. Often, when my affections have been kindled to a holy fervour, and my heart filled with divine love, have I applied my mind to the investigation of legal principles, 'till it has become entangled in the mazes and subtleties of the law, and I have found myself proportionably dead to spiritual things, and the cause of Christ. In this, nearly every other profession has the advantage of my own. Nothing convinces me more perfectly of the truth of the christian religion, as revealed in the Bible, than the utter contrast formed by the Spirit of Christ as exhibited in his followers, and the spirit of the world, as manifested in the carnal mind. The difference is as apparent as that between light and darkness. They are perfect *incompat-*

ibles: the prevalence of either, entirely excludes the other."*

"July 18th. During the whole of the last month I was quite too cold, and distant from God. My mind was so occupied with the changes in my circumstances, and so wounded by ill treatment from an unexpected quarter, that I found it required a greater effort than I was careful to make, to concentrate it on God. There is, however, no excuse for unfaithfulness; nor do I in the least justify myself for thus wandering from a God of infinite ability to protect me from all temptations. I bless God that he has reclaimed me."

"August 6th. For the last ten days, I have been much tried; and several times lost my reliance on God. He nevertheless appeared,—and somewhat remarkably, for my deliverance. Once I found myself evidently under his displeasure; but his promises restored peace and joy to my mind. How have my obligations to him accumulated!"

"August 20th. I do earnestly pray for a will more resigned to the dispensations of my heavenly Father. My besetting sin is a captious and complaining temper—the very opposite of chris-

* An inspired Apostle referred to this evidence as to a well known and obvious fact, in the inquiries, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?"

tian meekness, and patience. Oh for grace to overcome it; and to do all the will of God!"

Besides the burden of indwelling sin, and the temptations growing out of his connexions with an ensnaring world, and the nameless 'crafts and assaults of the Devil,'—from neither of which, was he at any time many hours exempt, Mr. Bacon was obliged during the same period, to struggle incessantly against many bodily infirmities. His complaints were complicated, and of such a nature as to excite his nervous system to a constant state of diseased action. When this fact is considered, in connexion with the other circumstances which have been adverted to, it will be a cause of admiration, that he was enabled to preserve so good a degree of equanimity. In the whole of the period embraced by the foregoing extracts from his journal, we perceive little or nothing of that dull and listless depression of spirits, under which he formerly laboured. This infirmity resulted, perhaps, chiefly from unsound health: but a sickly mind in his case, as in most others, co-operated with a disordered body; and, both the principles and the spirit of the gospel concur to disallow it. And this holy religion was, through the grace of God, sufficiently operative in Mr. Bacon's heart, to prevent a recurrence of so painful a condition of the mind. Even the infirmities of believers are sanctified to their good: and this blessed effect we are sometimes permitted to see, without taking

into view the retributions of a future world. Mr Bacon found occasion to say, when exhausted with fatigue and much indisposed, "my illness has not been without its use to me. It brought me back to a sense of absolute dependence on my God, and a closer union with my Saviour—and thus has been the means of restoring me to my religion, from which I had wandered, during the preceding week. The words of my Lord, 'Fear not; it is I;' and, I 'am the living bread;' gave me unspeakable comfort." "Returning from Lewisburg," he afterwards mentions, "my health sustained a severe injury. I was indisposed through the day. But my soul obtained a blessing. My God seems to cherish and uphold me."

The unsettled state of his health, and a habitual affection of the system, tending to epileptic spasms, obliged him to be constantly apprehensive of a speedy dismission from the world. Without in the least abridging his plans of usefulness, this circumstance was made the means of invigorating his zeal, and hastening his progress through every labour, and every stage of preparation for the dread event. Present duty was always the object which filled his mind, and engrossed his time. Future labours, and future trials, and the time, manner, and other circumstances of his death, were committed with entire confidence, to the wisdom and goodness of his heavenly Father. "On comparing the present state

of my health with that which I have possessed for several years past," he writes in the spring of 1819, "I find it has undergone a great change for the worse. I am now labouring under a severe cough, which, should it increase, I think must soon carry me off. I am willing to die; but it is my duty to be willing likewise to live, as long as I can do good."—On another occasion: "The death of * * * * * * which I witnessed, has had a happy effect in tranquillising my mind, and engaging it in the contemplation of my own dissolution. I would look beyond the grave for the consummation of my hopes."—"Only let me be found 'doing my Lord's will,' and what is the difference, whether a fit of the apoplexy or a lingering consumption, be commissioned to take me home?" "Holy Father," he prays on another occasion of reflection on the precarious state of his health, "prepare me for death. When I rise in the morning, let me go about the duties of the day as if to prepare to die at night. Thus shall 'I be found watching.'—My health evidently fails; and I often wish to die: but perhaps I am wrong."

CHAP. VII.

It is proper to exhibit, a little more at large, the exalted object to which the strongest aspirations of Mr. Bacon's soul were directed. His was a mark no less elevated than the perfection of that holiness, of which he had been already made, in a certain degree, the partaker. He had been entirely captivated with the discovery of his Saviour's image, which had been made to the eye of his faith; and his spirit never found entire repose until it was changed from one degree of resemblance to a still higher,—and eventually so sanctified throughout, as to reflect from every part, his unclouded glory. What were his expectations as to the degree of holiness attainable in the present life, does not clearly appear. But he knew that believers were permitted and required to aim at perfect purity: nothing less could bound his expansive desires, or satiate the perpetual thirst of his soul: and whether the point was to be attained in life, or at death, or beyond, was not so much an object of his inquiry, as, by what means he should reach it. "Jesus," he states in his journal, "is sweet and precious to my soul. I feel determined, through grace, to go on in a life of godliness, taking Jesus for my ALL. I will, with joy, sacrifice every thing that will not help me on to Jesus. Placing him before me,

and pressing on to the mark of his perfection, I will dismiss every impeding care,—will 'lay aside every weight and the sin which most easily besets me,' and still go onward to Jesus. God Almighty help me, Jesus help me, Holy Spirit help me, to keep this resolution." "Holiness of heart and life," he repeats, "is what I want, and must have: God for Christ's sake, will I believe, bestow it, if I strive with persevering earnestness for it." Subsequently: "Our meeting was thinly attended this evening,—but it was a refreshing season. I desire to live nearer, and still nearer to God. I want more faith, more love to God, more of the entire spirit of my blessed Saviour. Oh for more spiritual energy,—to be 'strengthened with all might in the inner man!'" Still later: "Dr. * * * * preached, to-day, on 'Holiness of heart.' The discourse came home to my conscience, forcibly. My mind is greatly exercised for 'holiness of heart.' It is the subject of my constant prayer. Oh that God would hear me!—'I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean; from all your filthiness and your idols will I cleanse you,' is a promise that habitually dwells in my thoughts. Give me, Lord, a clean heart, and cleanse me from all my idols. Oh affix the seal of Heaven to my soul! I cannot be satisfied without thee—thee, for my only portion." In reviewing his progress for a few days, he states on another occasion, "I am very unfaithful, yet my only prevailing desire

is, holiness of heart. Oh I need it; I desire it; I pray for it; I must have it! While I live, I will live for it. Nothing will ever satisfy me but perfect holiness."

Blessed Spirit! Thy prayer is heard; too soon for us, thy largest desires are fulfilled, in the kingdom of God! Drinking at the Fountain-head of holiness, thou canst thirst no more!

But the Saviour's benediction and promise, 'blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled,' have their partial accomplishment, in the present world. To very few could the qualification on which this promise depends, be appropriated with more manifest propriety, than to Mr. Bacon. The command of the Saviour, 'ask that your joy may be full,' was, likewise, through grace, in a good degree obeyed by him. He was incessant in his petitions for this very blessing. Why is it, that the doctrine of the divine influence on the minds of the saints, has fallen, in this age, if not into partial discredit, yet into so low and restricted a practical use, among those who are most interested in it? The orthodox cannot, indeed, disbelieve the promises which relate to so great a blessing;—the doctrine is retained in all our formularies of faith; but why is it not more valued? Why are the blessings which it implies, so remissly sought,—and so little expected? Next to the truth, that our redemption has been effected by the blood of the Son of

God, none more deeply concerns our blind and corrupted race, than that of the purchase and mission of the Holy Spirit to purify our hearts, bring down a foretaste of Heaven into our souls, and enlighten our understandings to comprehend the divine mysteries of the gospel. No promises are more intelligible and express, than those which relate to this inestimable privilege of believers. The doctrine has indeed, been fearfully corrupted, and abused. The enemies of the gospel could not have taken a measure of more fatal efficacy, for dimming its lustre, and curtailing its influence. This very consideration, instead of sinking its estimation in the minds of christians, and enfeebling the efforts of their faith in securing its benefits, should the more endear it to their hearts, and engage them in asserting its full influence in the economy of grace. Had every professing christian afforded in his own example, the same practical illustration of the nature and extent of the operations of the Spirit on the heart, as the subject of this memoir, not only would its opposers be silenced, but so illustrious a feature of our holy religion would impart to the whole system, in the view of the world, a glory which it has never exhibited since the age of the apostles. The narrative of this part of his christian experience forms a necessary supplement to the foregoing; without which the whole would be less scriptural, and manifestly imperfect. 'Wis-

dom's ways are' evinced by it to be 'ways of pleasantness, and all her paths' to be those of 'peace.' It displays in an attractive light, a specimen of those pure joys of the soul, peculiar to them who love God; with which 'no stranger intermeddles;' and which, the rapt apostle declares, 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart' not illuminated by the divine Spirit, to conceive.*

At the close of a well spent evening, he was able to write, "Thanks to the Lord, I have again been owned as his child, and blessed with his love. I repaired to the place of our weekly exercise of prayer, in a praying spirit; and no sooner entered, than I felt the return of the 'sweet Messenger of rest.' The holy Spirit evidently resumed his place in my mind. It was my duty to lead the devotions of the occasion. Every word came with an unction of love and affection. Grace ruled, and almost inspired the language and expression. I could sing with ineffable sweetness and ease. O holy, lovely, adorable Saviour, 'thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee!' I had the opportunity to speak a few words for him who was so near and so unspeakably good, to me, I trust, to inter-

* A slight attention to the apostle's argument in connexion with these words, will discover them to relate *principally*, if not wholly, to the spiritual communications made to the Saints, in the present world. 1. Cor. ii. 8, 9, 10.

ested hearers, and in faith that it will not be unproductive."

In another entry in his journal, he "desires to thank God that he has warmed his heart with his love, and that he has not to complain of spiritual lethargy to the same degree as formerly. He lived during the whole of the day in a region of etherial sunshine—so calm, so placid, so deeply peaceful to the mind," as to draw forth the exclamation, 'Oh this religion of Christ, 'tis a glorious work! What joys to be compared to those of his love!"—"How true is it," he remarks in the fruition of these same gracious communications, "how true is it, that the teachings of the Holy Spirit 'lead us into all truth!' I have this evening had a view of things which could only be revealed by the Spirit. With what a power of vigilance and discernment does the Spirit dwelling within the followers of Christ, arm the soul! How quick is it to discover the workings of sin, both in ourselves, and in our brethren! O beloved Saviour, O blessed God, I desire all thy communicable fulness!"

In the Autumn of 1818, he states, "The reading of Davies's sermon on the resurrection, caused me to tremble, and cry for mercy to be shown me on that day. But praised be the name of the Lord, on close examination, I find myself in a state of reconciliation to God,—and am overwhelmed with a sense of his goodness in receiving such a wretch. 'Oh how great

is his goodness!'"—A few weeks later he writes; "In conversation and prayer with a christian brother, I enjoyed a great freedom of access, and nearness of communion with my God. He bears with my infirmities, and 'heals my backslidings,' for his Son's sake. For some time past, I have been kept under the shadow of the Almighty, and in Christ Jesus, my soul exclaims, 'no condemnation—no condemnation!'"

In January following, he had occasion to note in his journal, "I this day was drawn still nearer to the source of holiness and love. Never have I realised in so short a time, so much of salvation. At an interview with a very few of my dear brethren this evening, I spent an hour of glory—and enjoyed a feast of marrow and fatness. For several days past, my joys have occasionally, been all unutterable."—In February, he thus describes the happy state of his feelings: "I spent the evening in social prayer and praise, and the glory of the Lord rested upon me; his holy Spirit filled me. The words 'I have made you, and I will bear, even I will carry you, and I will deliver you,' were delightfully applied to me. Joy, abundant joy, was the sensation which prevailed in my mind above all others. My 'peace was as a river, and my righteousness as an overflowing stream.' I cannot doubt, I do not doubt, but God has begun to purify my soul. I love holiness: and God grant

I may ever make holiness my only hope in Christ Jesus."

In the last of March, 1819, Mr. Bacon reviews his religious experience from that date up to the 5th of the same month, and with his customary sincerity states, that "for the greatest part of the time, I have been kept in a happy state of mind, have had very few trials of my religion, and been wonderfully the subject of divine grace."

Mr. Bacon's very theory in religion, may be properly termed, practical. He could conceive of nothing that deserved the name which did not comprehend love to God, faith in the Saviour, and charity to men,—each manifesting itself in its appropriate fruits. Hence, the barriers which some others choose to throw around themselves, and the members of their own particular religious sect, and which are sustained chiefly by certain verbal definitions of subordinate points of faith, were to him unknown; and unless interposed by the bigotry of others, in a manner that obliged them to be felt, were wholly disregarded. Between those who know the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, by the revelation of the Spirit,—whose names are written in Heaven,—and who have entered into an everlasting covenant with God and his people; and the servants of sin and heirs of death eternal, he saw an infinite difference. On this, he ever insisted. Professing christians of all names, were subjected to the test

of a comparison of their characters and lives, with the plainest marks of discrimination alleged in the scriptures between these different classes. A unity of faith in true believers, he knew there must be: and he was often, happily able to detect this essential unity, by a comparison of the temper and character; where others, insisting on an identity of phraseology in the definitions of their faith, would discover nothing but discord; and exclude from their fellowship those whom Christ had received. But, with this safe and scriptural catholicism, few have exercised more discrimination in a practical application of the true principles of estimating the claims of professors, to the character of real christians. There were in his view, not only many doctrines to which such must assent; but a deep, lasting and visible change, to be wrought by them, in their hearts and lives. Those, and those only, could he embrace as his brethren in Christ, whose orthodoxy was a living and operative principle of faith, productive of good works. On all these, whatever names they bore among men, he saw inscribed by the finger of God, in the most legible characters, the new name by which their birth-right is ascertained on earth, and their inheritance will be awarded in Heaven. On a certain occasion, he writes, "I have lately had my spirit grieved by hearing certain individuals venting their slanderous and pitiful spleen against my Methodist brethren. Alas! What

a want of grace do they shew! I thank God, he has made me love all his children, whatever name they may bear." On another occasion, writing to a christian friend, he says, "I feel bound to praise God that he has not permitted me to become a bigot to a sect of the christian church. It is the Bible and its author; it is Christ, and him crucified; it is salvation by faith; these are the grand and wonderful themes that are to exercise our minds and animate our souls, and move us to action. I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas! division and party!—This is the great error of christians. Let us have done with it. We must all be of Christ, and blessed be our God that we are getting to see eye to eye."

Of the strength of his habitual affection for his christian brethren, the following passages from his journal will furnish a remarkable proof; when it is considered that the individual to whom they relate belonged to a communion between which and his own, the *visible* difference was very strongly marked. "I spent the evening with brother *****. I love him as a dear brother. His voice, ever since I first heard it in prayer, has been music in my ear." Soon afterwards: "Brother ***** is now with me. His society has always proved beneficial to me. I am strengthened by his counsel, and stirred up by his example. I trust our mutual prayers may draw down upon us a mutual blessing. I am

singularly attached to him. I cannot say, that I love any earthly object more than him, except my son,—and I am not sure even of that. He appears to be the most faithful christian that I ever met with. An unction from the holy One rests abundantly upon him. I shall soon part with him. God grant we may meet above, where parting scenes are 'felt and feared no more.'"

In the following incident which Mr. Bacon casually records in his journal, for November, 1818, more than one trait of his greatly altered character will be illustrated; and at the same time a species of injurious treatment, of the most cruel description, be exposed, which can afford no gratification except to minds that are nearly lost to the feelings of common humanity. To take advantage of the known principles of an humble christian, who is deterred by the fear of his God, and prevented by his love to men, not only from inflicting an injury, but even from wishing to retaliate it upon his persecutor, to wrong and wound him, certainly evinces a compound of moral depravity, and unmanly self-debasement, which, it is to be hoped, does not often meet in the same human breast.

"In the business of the day I experienced several trials of patience:—one was of a severe description. In a cause in which Mr. ***** was opposed to me, I had occasion to cite 'Peake's Evidence,' in reference to unliquidated dam-

ages. I contended that they could not be an offset in a case similar to the one in hand. I said, (and it was the very point on which the merits of the case turned) 'This is law.—It is the law of Pennsylvania.'—Mr * * * * * saw the bearing of the cited passage, and several times rudely interrupted my remarks by declaring, 'That is only English law.' I said 'gentlemen, this is the law of Pennsylvania:—this book is law in Pennsylvania: and it is rather unfair in you, Mr. * * * * * to misrepresent it.' I proceeded, amidst his still more frequent interruptions;—but in justice to my client, was obliged to insist that the cited authority *was law*. Eight or ten times in succession, he declared I was 'a fool.' I paid no regard to his opprobrious language; and he became gradually warmed to a high state of exasperation, and said, my assertions were 'false.' I at length replied that 'Mr. * * * * * had lately been to Philadelphia to take new lessons in politeness, and that he was a gentleman.' I also told the referees, that it was 'impudence in the plaintiff's counsel to deny that the passage in question was law.'—I am not conscious of having felt the least emotion of anger: but on reflection, I regret the sarcastic nature of my reply, and my attempt to wound his feelings by ridicule. But he most unfairly and untruly misrepresented the law, and called me 'fool' and 'liar' for maintaining it.—The time was, when I should have instantly seized

a deadly weapon on such an occasion; and suffered nothing but blood to atone for the indignity :—I acknowledge it with remorse and shame. But, thank God, I have no disposition now, to injure any man. Several gentlemen of the bar, have taken advantage of my religion, more than once, when I fully believed, and do still believe, that I was stating the truth, to call me a 'liar.' They all know that if I were a sinner like themselves, or if I were as once I was, they would as soon have eaten coals of fire, as accused me to my face of 'lying.' But they know also, that my nature is now changed, and that my religion, and my dispositions forbid my retaliating evil for evil: I thank God he holds the reins of my passions in his own hand, and all this abuse is not suffered to make me angry. I receive these things as a part of that persecution with which I have laid my account as the portion of 'all who will live godly in Christ Jesus.'"

About three months after the date of this occurrence, Mr. Bacon attended the individual to whom it principally refers, in his dying moments. He had visited him almost daily, administering the most affectionate and salutary counsel during the last stages of his illness; and, in putting down a few reflections excited by his death, observes, "We have often differed about our professional business; and perhaps he sometimes used me ill. But as it usually

happens, both parties were in fault. In reference to our last dispute," (that just related) "I regret that I said any thing in retaliation of the injury he did me. I heartily forgive all my enemies; and pray God to forgive me for not living with Mr. * * * * * and all others, so as to recommend religion as much in my conduct, as by my lips."

It would be difficult to assign a cause more directly or vitally affecting the interests of religion, than the character of its ministers. Their designation to the sacred office has hence, in every orthodox and truly evangelical branch of the christian church, been submitted to the especial providence of Him with whose message they are charged. No miraculous interposition, either in the designation, or the ministrations of the christian priesthood, is now to be expected by the church. But its divine Head observes an uniform method, both in delegating, and aiding in their work, the ministers of the gospel; in which the supernatural influences of his holy Spirit have a direct and most important concern. In the appointment of ministers, the church indeed, has an agency:—and commonly a large share of the guilt incurred in the ordination of improper persons, rests with her. Her duty is not so properly to select, as to ascertain by the rules of scripture, *whom Christ has selected* for this work; and confer a formal authority on those whom He had previously prepared by his

providence and his grace, and 'moved by his Spirit,' to receive it.

It by no means follows, that the authority conferred by ordination is not essential to the ministerial character: judging from scripture precedents, we are certainly led to the conclusion that the right of ministering in the word and sacraments, can in no case have place without the concurrence of ecclesiastical ordination, with those qualifications which are prior in their order, and of paramount importance.

These are of two classes. The first are such as all the living members of Christ, whether called to act in a public, or private capacity, possess in common; and they are essential to the christian character. It was Mr. Bacon's happy distinction not only to exhibit to others the most lucid proofs of his regeneration and acceptance as a child of God, but to possess in his own breast, the 'witness of the Spirit,' to his adoption, and a steadfast hope of salvation. Some share of this confidence is essential to the regenerate character: a still larger share appears ordinarily necessary to the ministers of Christ; and few have enjoyed this humble assurance in a higher degree than Mr. Bacon, while preparing for the ministry. His devotion to the service of his Redeemer was unequivocal; his delight in it, supreme; his zeal was ardent, and his experimental knowledge of the efficacy of evangelical truth, and the power of divine grace,

was thorough and various. Considered as a christian, few will hesitate to pronounce him eminent. With the other qualifications, which without being peculiar to those who are called into the public service of the sanctuary, are still essential to that vocation, he has been seen to have been amply endowed. In a talent for communicating instruction, for conciliating the affections of men of various and opposite characters and prejudices, and for avoiding offences, he particularly excelled; and in the christian virtues of humility, self-deinal, forbearance, and disinterestedness, he was a shining example to the church and the world.

To the extent of these qualifications, Mr. Bacon was especially fitted for the holy work of the ministry. But these alone, it must be confessed, could never authorise him to leave a profession in which divine providence had situated him, and made him eminently useful. Many christians in similar circumstances, are misled by their own zeal, the advice of their brethren, and a partial survey of the question of duty, to turn aside from the open path in which divine providence has fitted them, with most comfort to themselves, and advantage to the cause of Christ, to pursue their way to Heaven. An indefinite increase of faithful evangelists and pastors is certainly needed: and woe to them who are called to the work, if they do not preach the gospel! But those who are appa-

rently directed in the overruling providence of God, to a different pursuit, and are manifestly useful in their sphere, should most cautiously verify their call to the exercise of the sacred function, before they venture to adopt it. By such persons the consideration may be profitably remembered and applied, that a labourer merely unskilful, may do the cause of religion a positive disservice both by abandoning his proper station of usefulness in life, and by occupying the place of a more accomplished workman. It would be but a most unacceptable expression of zeal or love for the Redeemer, to presume that his interest in the world, requires the ministry of those whom he has not chosen; or that he has indeed chosen those who are not well appointed to the holy calling. But the work of the christian ministry is various, and will always require the employment of a great variety of gifts and qualifications: and recourse must, at last, be had both by individuals, and the ordaining authorities of the church, to the evidence of a *special call*, in order to decide the question of duty. Those who are obliged to inquire into the true nature of this call, and to act in obedience to it, have great need of the especial illumination and guidance of the Holy Spirit. For the direction of such, a more particular detail of Mr. Bacon's principal trials and encouragements, and of the methods by which

divine Providence finally introduced him into the ministry, may reflect some useful light.

He appears to have had impressions on this subject, even prior to the full establishment of his hopes in relation to his own salvation: which however, had very little or no weight in the ultimate decision of the question. This was very properly taken on far different grounds. Desirous, above all things, to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of men, he was naturally induced to inquire into the most effectual means of realising these ends. The ministry occurred as offering more fully to combine his talents and exertions in the accomplishment of his devout wishes, than any other profession. Hence, the sacred office came to assume in his estimation, a dignity, and the ministerial work a desirableness, which raised in his mind for both, a strong and decided predilection over every other pursuit. The possibility that God might design for him so great an honour and happiness, at an early period of his religious course, and ever afterwards, prevented him from entering into any permanent engagements which might, in the least, counteract the gracious purpose. On perceiving that the indications of Providence appeared to favour this habitual bent of his desires; that the advice of his most judicious christian friends, concurred; that his most active and public labours for the promotion of the cause of Christ, were both acceptable to his pious

friends, and useful to the souls of all classes; that these labours were attended with great personal comfort, and the evident approbation and blessing of God; and when he reflected also, that he had constantly committed himself to the direction of God, in fervent prayer; it was impossible for him not to entertain, in addition to his strong desires, for entering the ministry, an animating hope of their eventual gratification. A lively sense of the numerous imperfections, and deficiencies which his own eye, much better than those of his fellow-men, could discover in his christian character, for the responsible and difficult work, would often damp the rising hope, and produce a momentary fluctuation of his purpose. But he remarked, when the frame of his mind was most spiritual, and his affections purest, and best directed, that his doubts were proportionably few, and his inclination towards the work, strongest. To a judicious and intimate christian friend, he thus unbosomed himself, in the early part of the year 1819: "Since I have experienced a change of heart, and the purposes of my soul have been turned in a new, and I would humbly hope, in a heavenly direction, the current of my desires has been flowing towards the ministry. Consequently, every thing which could be brought to bear on this object, has been made to do it. But what could be accomplished in the short space of two and a half years, in the midst of a busy profession? and that with

a constitution crumbling to pieces under the pressure of sedentary habits? But with regard to my unfitness, and unworthiness for this awful charge, what shall I say? I feel overwhelmed with its awful responsibilities. I cannot particularise,—I am *all* unfit. Human learning, whatever mine may be, is not a grain in the balance. I feel no worthiness or fitness; but, as I said before, the current of my desires has been setting towards the ministry. The Shepherd and Bishop of Souls has never suffered me to be at rest on that subject. I have been 'pressed in spirit' to preach the gospel, and that continually. I have sometimes, for a short time, induced the belief, that it could not be my duty, circumstanced as I have found myself. But I am now afraid to resist what I must think is the will of my Heavenly Father. I am willing to be 'as clay in the hands of the potter.' 'Thy will be done,' is the language of my most fervent aspirations to God. I cannot say less than that I am willing to do any thing for the cause of my Redeemer, that it is his will I should do. I consider myself as wholly his. Wherever, and whenever, I can find it to be his will that I should labour, then and there, I say 'Speak, Lord, thy servant waits to hear.'"

The direct influence of the Spirit of God on his mind, the effects of which Mr. Bacon characterises by being "pressed in spirit to preach the gospel," is distinctly recognised by

the Episcopal church in the ordination service, as a qualification universally necessary for the sacred office. It may be described more particularly, as a strong conviction of the duty of entering the ministry, founded on rational and scriptural evidence of possessing the requisite qualifications for the work, attended with an ardent and prevailing love of it, and enforced by the direct agency of the divine Spirit on the mind. The line of duty was so distinctly drawn in his mind by these concurring testimonies, that he employed in his diary, the following decisive language in relation to it, in March of 1819: "I am now satisfied of my call to the office of the ministry. But past experience has convinced me, that in giving up my mind to my secular business sufficiently to enable me to do it justice, the state of my feelings may alter, and I shall begin to doubt my call. I now enter it on record, that however I may hereafter doubt, I still have been clearly taught my duty, and must recur to this date and page to set me right."

But however satisfactory to his judgment and conscience, this body of evidence may have proved, Mr. Bacon never contemplated the work without trembling. The greatness of its responsibilities, and the consequences as they must affect his own eternal state, of a faithful or negligent performance of its duties, presented themselves to his enlightened mind, with awful interest. This feeling was enhanced by a sur-

vey of the effects which his ministry must produce on the present, and everlasting happiness of a multitude of his fellow immortals; and on the interests of Christ, and the manifestation of the divine glory, in the church and the world! Had his faith been less vigorous, and his love and fear of God less operative, his sensations in the anticipation of this work, would have been proportionably less overwhelming. An unstudied expression of these feelings on the approach of his ordination, is furnished in the following extracts from his diary:

"August 10th. Every thing seems to promise well in respect to my ordination. But the good Lord help me! As I draw nearer the solemn occasion, I feel more sensibly the awful nature of the vocation. Oh for more of the grace of God; more light; more strength from Heaven; more of Christ!"

"August 20th. This vile and wicked heart! I almost shudder to undertake with it, the duties of the ministry. Help me; humble me, O my God: and make me as a little child!"

"September 6th. Having previously sustained the requisite examinations, I was yesterday, ordained deacon, by the Right Rev. Bishop White. It was a severe trial; but the Lord sustained me in a remarkable manner. His presence comforted me. I preached twice on the same day, and the Lord gave me grace to do it much better than my fears had apprehended."

CHAP. VIII.

The day succeeding his ordination, had been previously fixed by Mr. Bacon, for commencing his mission in furtherance of the views of the Philadelphia Bible society. The experience which he had acquired by his successful exertions in behalf of Sabbath schools, in a part of the same region, had eminently qualified him for this service. The objects of the mission are stated in the instructions of the committee by whose immediate appointment Mr. Bacon had been engaged in it, to be, "To form and bring into existence, or lay the foundation of bringing into existence, hereafter, Bible societies or associations in any part of the state, where it shall be proper to make the attempt." The committee "pledged the most zealous and active co-operation and support of the Bible society of Philadelphia, to all associations that might form for the *sole* purpose of distributing the sacred scriptures." The route, and particular means of executing the purposes of the society, which it would be proper for their agent to adopt, were very properly submitted by the committee, to his own judgment, and to the direction of future circumstances.

The cause of disseminating the sacred writings both in christian and foreign countries,

needs not to justify or recommend it, the suffrage of an individual's opinion; and perhaps can gain little at the present day, from the example of any particular instance of zeal and disinterestedness, however sincere and fervent. But it is from Mr. Bacon's journal and correspondence, during the performance of this tour, that the most satisfactory and numerous testimonies of his clerical talents, and fidelity can be derived; and the progressive maturity of his christian character in an interesting part of the last year of his life, be best traced.

Before leaving Philadelphia he had arranged with his pious friends a plan of correspondence; and secured for himself and his mission, a special remembrance in their daily prayers. Among these friends, were to be found the members of several different religious societies, whose peculiarities, were lost in the deep interest which they had been taught to feel in the advancement of the gospel, and the salvation of their fellow-men. The very respectable member of the committee, with whose elevated and enlightened piety, the tone of his own, could accord in the happiest unison; and who as well from that circumstance, as the station he held in the board, engrossed a principal share of his correspondence while employed on this mission, was attached to a christian communion different from his own. But in a communication and interchange of pious feelings the most unreserved, by these two distin-

guished proficients in the school of Christ, not a discordant sentiment seems to have been advanced, nor a jarring emotion to have interrupted the sweet and holy communion of their spirits. The entire correspondence would be highly appreciated by every truly pious reader; but its admission is necessarily precluded by the plan of this memoir. A few of the most interesting passages in Mr. Bacon's letters, only, can with a due regard to the unity of the narrative, be here introduced.

Mr. Bacon had already received several communications from Washington, explanatory of the designs both of the Government, and of the Colonization society, in reference to the formation of a settlement for the reception of liberated Africans and free blacks of the United States, on the Coast of Africa. The offer of a situation in the projected expedition had been informally made him; and he was now waiting for the events of Providence to explain to him more fully in what way it would be proper for him to treat that application. From the first, he had evinced a willingness to engage in the service, if no future obstacle should be interposed; and both entered upon, and executed his present mission, with that to Africa in immediate prospect; although his appointment was neither made, nor accepted, in form, until more than a month after his return.

In a letter written from York four days after the commencement of this mission, and only five days after his ordination, to a christian friend in Philadelphia, after naming several of his pious brethren in that city, he subjoins, "Do let all these my beloved friends, know that I can never reward them for their prayers, before, at, and after my ordination. I can only pray God to bless them, as he has in consequence of their supplications, blessed me."

Under the same date Mr. Bacon wrote to another christian friend: "Your approbation of my first sermon encourages me. I make a point to give a practical application to every doctrine. I think myself right; but many judge differently." **** "I started from Philadelphia quite asleep; and was not half awake at West-Chester:—but I am now beginning a little to open my eyes on the magnitude of my object!" **** "At Columbia, the Lord gave me uncommon help. 'All the ends of the world shall see the salvation of our God,' was the text. I had no time for preparation:—but as I was walking over the ten miles between Lancaster and Columbia, I occasionally took out my pocket Testament to see what the Lord would show me. At length, my eye was directed to the 6th verse of the iii. chap. of Luke. I saw it was quoted from Isaiah; and on my arrival in the village, took a Bible, and turned to it. The Lord opened my mind's eye, and helped me abundantly."—Mr.

Bacon's pulpit preparations were generally of a very similar description. Among his voluminous manuscripts was not found, it is believed, an entire discourse for the pulpit. Engaged, as he constantly was, in the laborious prosecution of other collateral labours, he neither had sufficient time, nor did the nature of his pursuits require him, to observe the same exactness in the style and method of his addresses, which the periodical demands of a parochial charge would have rendered necessary. His talents too, were of that peculiar character which, while they less fitted him for proficiency in the seclusion of the closet, enabled him better to dispense with that advantage, than most of his clerical brethren. Add to this, the maturity of his mind, its various furniture, and a habit of public speaking, acquired by several years' practice at the bar,—and few but must approve of the method he observed in his pulpit performances, without deducing from his example a single argument in recommendation of a similar practice to his juniors ; who can justly pretend neither to his peculiar qualifications, nor his apology, for the extemporaneous performance of their pulpit duties. Mr. Bacon carried with him, wherever he was called to officiate, an example—a character—a weight of influence, which, itself, partially accomplished the work of every discourse, before he opened his lips :—an advantage which a

younger man of the best promise can scarcely be expected, in any instance, to possess.

Although the accomplishment of the specific objects of his mission engrossed its full share of Mr. Bacon's sincere and zealous endeavours, he never lost sight of the great and paramount ends of the gospel ministry. In the letter from which the last quotation is extracted, he adds: "What can be done for your society, with God's ever-needed help, shall be done. But, my soul is in pain for Zion. For her, her Bible, and her children, my waking and my sleeping hours are filled with ceaseless solicitude. I do pray that the Lord may give me souls, as well as Bible societies, for my hire."

Having been for a very few days engaged in his work, he adopted the plan of sending his appointments forward, one, two, and even three weeks before him, into the different counties and villages which he intended to visit; together with a general annunciation of his object, and an invitation to the people, to assemble at the period specified, in readiness to act in the manner which a due consideration of the important object, and their particular circumstances should render most advisable. By observing this course, and writing beforehand to most of the influential individuals, clergy and people, in the several counties, he was enabled to combine in furtherance of the objects of his mission, a large portion of the moral strength of the different

communities through which he passed. September 15th, he thus writes under the York date. "My course is shaped by circumstances, which in my opinion, fully approve it, but which I really am at this moment too much agitated to detail. Oh, sir, I am tearing asunder the tenderest ties in this place, leaving my friends apparently for ever, as to the present world. There are dear christian souls here,—some amongst others, that claim me as their spiritual father. I cannot trust myself on this subject,—and must quit it." * * * * "I preached here twice on Sunday.—At evening, we had the house, yard and street, filled. My voice reached them all."—"I am bound to tell you, my dear sir, that although the prospect of parting with my beloved friends is a sore and heavy trial, yet ever since I was ordained, I have had the unceasing presence of God. My soul has been all prayer and praise. God gives me grace to bear all. He is my ALL—my only, and my all-sufficient hope,—my strength and my salvation. The spirit is willing; but the flesh is weak."

In prosecuting his tour from York, he visited Gettysburg, and other places in Adams county; but complains of the most disheartening indifference and disinclination to move in furtherance of the Bible cause, in some of his clerical brethren, there. He considered their excuses as quite insufficient; and was for a short season, severely tried by the coldness of his reception. From

Chambersburg he next writes, under date of the 18th: "I have surmounted the conflict which the part my friends chose to take, produced in my feelings, and have given them over to God in prayer; and feel now quite at ease." * * * "In this county (Franklin) my labours have been pleasant and successful. The Bible cause prospers. It is in good hands—which are actuated by zealous hearts. What a contrast between this and Adams! There, I could do nothing, because *nothing* had been done before. Here I can do nothing, because *every thing* has been done *already*." * * "I begin to find that, to travel all day, and preach every night, is by no means, an easy task."

The cause of christian benevolence in all its various branches, is so perfectly identical and unique, as to turn all temperate competition to the strengthening of the common interest. This fact is happily exemplified in the following passage from a letter dated "Newville, September 20th;" and was occasioned by the occurrence in this part of the tour, of several Bible associations, auxiliary to the American, instead of the Philadelphia, Bible Society: "I find the friends of the American Bible society every where, at first, jealous of my mission, and cool in their reception of me. But they have their feelings much changed, if I can get an opportunity to preach to them. Your magnanimous resolution to send an agent to aid the CAUSE OF THE BIBLE,

without confining him to efforts in favour of your own institution, 'heaps coals of fire on the heads,' of your suspecting friends (for it would be hard to call them enemies) and will raise your character more than a thousand auxiliaries, without it."

The remarks and suggestions which Mr. Bacon proceeds, in the same letter, to make in relation to the best mode of eliciting and combining the resources of the religious public in favour of the Bible cause, are capable of the same advantageous application to any of the great charitable objects of the day: and the time must come—and may it speedily arrive, when that, or some similar expedient shall be generally adopted for obtaining the means of evangelising and converting the world: "Let a general association be formed in every county: of which the members are to pay one, and two dollars, annually: and in every village and congregation, erect an auxiliary; of which the terms of membership shall be fifty, and even twenty-five cents. To effect this, let a missionary be employed to spend, at least, four or six weeks, in every county, with instructions to leave the collections in the treasury of the associations in which they shall be respectively obtained. By this means no county could be expected to produce the cause less than one thousand dollars. From many, three times that amount would be realised.—The great advan-

tage of village associations, is, that they admit of so reducing the terms of membership as to bring them within the means of all, and thus uniting in the object, the entire community. It is better for the cause to have two hundred contributors of twenty-five cents each, than fifty at a dollar. You, in the former way, interest the feelings, and stir up the gifts and virtues, of all. From donors of twenty-five cents, you train them to become contributors of dollars, in a few years. Again; suppose twenty men scattered throughout a county, and all, the members of one society. Two or three only, in the county-town, have the business to do:—the rest are idle. But if you have twenty auxiliaries, you have work enough for all: each has a post of duty to fill, and his zeal is kept warm by the excitement. Besides, the more local you make the societies, the deeper interest you excite in those who are its members, to cherish and support it."

So difficult would it appear to have been for this zealous missionary to spare his zeal where good might be done, or to confine its range to any single class of benevolent objects, that few besides would have effected as much for any one in the same time, as he found the means of accomplishing for several. That branch of his correspondence which was carried on with the particular friends and promoters of Sunday schools, discovers so much ardour, observation, and industry to have been exercised in behalf

of these institutions, as naturally to induce the supposition that no other object could have shared his attention. On the other hand, when it is considered that, besides the time spent in writing to individuals on his route, in forming, advising, and exciting to increased duties, a great number of Bible associations,—he travelled upwards of one hundred miles, and preached eight times, weekly, and kept up a very full and almost daily correspondence with the committee,—it is nearly incredible that he should have been concerned in any cause, except the direct business of his mission.

On the 22d of September, he reached Harrisburg; having pressed the object of his mission in Lancaster, York, Gettysburg, Chambersburg, Shippensburg, Newville, and Carlisle, and every intermediate village and settlement where it could be done with the prospect of advantage. His perseverance, and judicious zeal is evinced in a single paragraph of his letter, under the Harrisburg date. "This mission is most seasonable,—bad as the times are thought to be. You can scarcely imagine the cries and groans of distress throughout the country. But, I will not listen to them. If retrenchments are to be made, the Lord's treasury is no place to begin them at. I tell the people to lay hands first on their sins, and follies, and extravagancies; to place them under a heavy contribution indeed, before they venture to defraud religion of its

claims."—He had now, to a certain extent, made himself acquainted by actual experience, with the nature of a minister's duties and consolations, and from a deep sense of both, states, "I must say, I am a happy man; and would not be out of the ministry for a thousand worlds. I am a poor worm; but the Lord does bless me; and I will praise him."

In his next, dated Jersey-Shore, Lycoming county, October 6th, he writes, "Do pray for me. One prayer of faith—the 'effectual fervent prayer of the righteous,' would help me much. Think of your poor weak, exhausted, wandering missionary; often so oppressed as not to be able to hold up his head. I am now, too far spent to write:—and must drink my herb-tea, and go to bed." * * * * "One thing I believe I may state, and that is, that, hitherto, we have succeeded in getting all the money the people bring to church with them, out of their pockets. In one instance, an old German came several miles into town on Monday morning, to give a *dollar*, after having heard the Sunday evening sermon, at which he had contributed his *cent*—all he had with him." * * * * "I preach every where, and at all times, if an opportunity serves. At Millersburg, I arrived at sun-set, asked for permission to preach; obtained a place—the Methodist meeting-house;—and in less than an hour after my arrival, without any previous notice, was preaching to two hundred people."

* * * "What a privilege is that christian intercourse with my dear Philadelphia brethren, of which I am now deprived! Oh could I but meet them in these mountains!—but, we will try to meet in the *skies*."

From "Warriors' Run, October 5th," he writes: "I have need of your letters, and of your prayers. I look through the formidable list of my appointments, and sigh and even weep over it; and cry for help, to Heaven. My health is unsettled. I should not be surprised, if some of these mountains should afford me a shelter in sickness; nor must you, if some of them furnish me with a grave. But I live, and am willing to die, for the Lord. His presence is my abiding solace:—no hiding of his face, or withdrawing of his favour, does he call me to experience."

A passage in his letter from Bellefonte, on the 7th, while it depicts strongly, the pious frame of his feelings, would seem almost to carry in it a presentiment of the early as well as the signally happy termination of his own earthly labours. "I had a lonely ride through the woods this day, of nearly twenty miles.—The yellow tints of autumn upon the trees, and the fading green of the fields seemed continually to admonish me of my own destined decay, and indeed made me more than half willing to consider myself as an autumnal leaf just about to fall. I could not however forbear wishing I might be rather

like the peach-trees every where to be seen broken down and absolutely killed by the fruit which they had brought to full maturity. Oh if I could fall by the luxuriance of my fruit-bearing! but the Lord's will be done."

A very unequivocal proof of his sincere love of the work in which he was so laboriously active, was, the unaffected cheerfulness with which he pursued even the most arduous and painful parts of it. The following paragraphs are from under the date of "Milton, October 11th."

"This afternoon," he observes, "at two o'clock, I preached at Watsonstown, according to a prior appointment. On my arrival, I was about to stop at a tavern door, when an old man thus addressed me;—'Don't-stop here: yonder is the house where you are to stop, and the *barn* where you are to preach. And when you have done that, I'll thank you to come and spend the night.' I determined that, since the Lord had made me a new threshing instrument, as he promised Jacob, I would not use it with the less zeal for being on a *threshing-floor*. I did my best: The congregation was determined to hear the sermon at greater length at the nearest church. 'For,' said they, 'had we thought it would have been like this, we would have had all the people out.'"

Mr. Bacon's labours in the promotion of all the objects to which he had hitherto been devoted, were much in detail. But his mind was ca-

pable of the most comprehensive survey of the more general relations, and remoter results, of charitable and christian exertions: and it was the benevolence of his heart, and a principle of duty, which prompted him to such labours as, humble and subordinate in themselves, were still the necessary parts of the system. But he never lost sight of the relative place which they held in the grand outline which they all went to fill. "I have placed this cause," he writes, under date of October 13th, "on the broad basis of the wants of six hundred millions of heathens,—making those of the million of people within our own limits, whom I suppose to be destitute—a matter of subordinate concern: and insisting that, until every human being can read the wonderful works of God in his own language, our efforts must be unremitting. If we rest the subject on any basis of smaller dimensions, the people directly imagine that their aid is no longer wanted."

It was Mr. Bacon's earliest and uniform opinion, that among all the measures dictated by the benevolence, and executed by the zeal of the present age, for the spread of the gospel, there could exist no possible cause of unfriendly competition. Hence, in urging the claims of one object of christian benevolence, he was careful not to disparage the just merits of any other. The comparative value of Bible and Missionary efforts, has been often canvassed; but, from the

intimate connexion subsisting between them, and their direct tendency by different means to the same blessed results, it can never be exactly estimated by human sagacity. Any disquisition proceeding upon the attempt to contrast their respective merits, or upon any other grounds than the intention of magnifying the importance of both, must be considered in the character of an unprofitable, if not a misleading speculation.— Mr. Bacon continues; "The interest, and zeal, and means, of this part of the community, have lately been pre-engaged in favour of the Missionary cause by the exertions of an agent from the parent society. Of this however, I would not complain, if the cause of Bibles were not beaten down, in order to raise that of missions upon it. This is wrong. In organising associations for Bibles, I commonly advert to the importance of missions; but in pleading for missions, they depreciate the Bible cause: and have in some instances raised the former, on the ruins of the latter. One instance, I find, where Bible funds have been transferred from their object, to aid missions. This is 'a pious fraud,' at least."

Having traversed no less than twenty-one of the counties of Pennsylvania in different directions, and in the incessant exercise of zeal and industry, such as have been described, he returned to Philadelphia, on the fifteenth day of November.

The report which he presented to the committee on the 22d, is an interesting, and to the institution for which it was prepared, must have proved, a highly useful document. An enlarged view of the cause to which it related, was presented; a body of valuable specific information, adduced; and many measures of great prospective advantage to the Bible interest, were suggested for the consideration of the society, which were supported by arguments founded on actual experience and observation. The conclusion of this report exhibits the following summary view of the labours of its indefatigable author, in this interesting mission, accompanied with a very appropriate expression of the characteristic piety and humility of his feelings:—"In fine, your agent was absent from this city sixty-nine days; traversed twenty-one counties; preached seventy-four discourses; and during that time travelled more than one thousand miles. He has had much fatigue and many anxious hours for the success of this mission. When he looks back on the distance, the time, the labour, the heat, the cold, the weakness of body and want of faithfulness, by which his journey has been rendered memorable to him, he cannot but admire the degree of health and happiness which he now enjoys; and is sensibly affected with the boundless goodness and unmerited grace of God. If your agent was enabled to endure fatigue; if he could plead the cause of the Bible; if

people could be gathered to hear; if a disposition to imbibe instruction was witnessed; if their feelings could be excited and drawn out into action; all was done by the Lord. There is no room for the board or their agent to feel the slightest self-gratulation. But there is room to praise God continually, that so much has been done; and to lament for that unfaithfulness, which has prevented much more, that ought to have been done."

The board of managers of the Philadelphia Bible society, in their report read on the next annual meeting, made very honourable mention of the zeal and fidelity which their agent had evinced in performing this mission; and from the report of the same board in the year still subsequent, it appears that the effects of his labours were visible in the substantial benefits which they had conferred on the cause of the Bible, in their territorial limits.

A strong impression in favour of that, and every congenial measure for extending and increasing the knowledge and power of the true religion among men, was certainly made wherever this mission reached. Besides referring this effect to the direct blessing of God, to which it is ultimately to be wholly ascribed, we are able to see in the qualifications of the instrument, and the fitness of the means employed, a positive adaptation of both, to the production of the happy result.

Mr. Bacon was an honest advocate of the cause he plead: and his sincerity implied more than a cold assent of the understanding to the reasons which prove the importance of the object. Every consideration which he pressed upon others, had deeply affected his own heart. A sacred warmth and impressive sincerity of feeling, manifested themselves in every expression, and every effort which the cause drew from him. From the very conformation of human nature, this qualification alone, must have gained to his message not only the attention, but the partial assent of all, and the cordial and active concurrence of a large majority, of his auditors, wherever he moved.

He was wholly devoted to his work. Every inferior and unrelated concern was not only unable to divert his pursuit, but was nearly dismissed from his heart, and excluded from his thoughts. His work was before him; and it engrossed the undivided energies of his body and mind.

He was likewise faithful. More is implied in this quality, than an industrious and diligent attention to the work of his mission. He had made the cause his own:—every advantage was sought and seized with active and untiring avidity: his mind was bent incessantly on the subject,—inventing arguments, devising means, surveying for information, the past, and pressing for fresh motives to exertion, into the future. His

work was, in a manner, identified with his existence itself; and its success interwoven with the highest ideas of happiness which he suffered himself to cherish.

It must be added, that he was also eloquent. His address was respectable; his elocution distinct and just; his language impressive; and his conceptions original and striking. This would have been the entire definition and utmost reach of his eloquence, had not divine grace laid the foundation of a far higher and more affecting kind. His look, his manner, his voice, his subject, his arguments, his allusions,—every thing in short, belonging to the composition and delivery of his discourses, which could serve as the index of his feelings and the ruling passion of his mind, took its character from that 'unction from the holy One,' by which his soul had been so richly imbued. His eloquence was that of a messenger from God, breathing the temper of Heaven, forgetting himself while treating with immortal natures, for the honour of the King of glory, and searching by the light which had been imparted to his own mind, the dark recesses of the hearts of others. The criterion of true eloquence is its power to convince, to impress, and to move the mind, for useful ends. Subjected to the test of this standard, Mr. Bacon must, as a preacher of the gospel, be pronounced eloquent.

CHAP. IX.

SHORTLY after the discovery of this country, and its first settlement by the subjects of European governments, the latter were seduced* by representations originating in the inordinate cupidity of the adventurers, to extend their sanction to a traffic, by which all their American possessions were eventually filled with enslaved Africans. So flagrant a violation of the sacred laws of humanity could not fail, in the just providence of God, to entail on the very communities which it was employed to benefit, evils but little less numerous and various, that the iniquity itself had been complicated. Before the epoch of the independence of this country, this trade formed an important branch of the commerce of England, and was freely permitted in nearly all her American colonies. But the adop-

* It has been satisfactorily proved by an English philanthropist, that Charles V. of Spain, and Elizabeth, of England, who first legalised this trade in their respective dominions, were both very imperfectly acquainted with its cruelty and injustice, as respects the immediate victims of it, and grossly deceived as to its impolicy in relation to the colonies themselves; at the time they were prevailed upon to give it their sanction. The former lived to be more correctly informed as to the inhuman nature of the traffic, and actually revoked, in 1542, the license which he had granted for carrying it on, twenty-five years before.

tion of republican forms of government in the different states, made way for the institution of such municipal regulations as had the effect to preclude the further importation of slaves into that section of the country lying to the north and east of Maryland. A provision was likewise incorporated in the Federal constitution, in 1787, by which Congress was authorised to pass an act for the entire abolition of the trade by American citizens, at the expiration of twenty years. A law to that effect was, accordingly, enacted in 1807. But prior to this era, all the individual states had adopted regulations either abolishing slavery directly or prospectively, in their respective limits; or giving to individual proprietors a discretionary right, on certain prudential conditions, to liberate their own slaves. The consequence was, the rapid accumulation in the community, of a class of people, freed indeed from personal bondage, but still separated by indelible characteristics, from the great body of citizens; destitute of many of their privileges, and generally debased in morals, and in intellect, quite below the grade of christian, and even of civilized society. Their improvement has been the object of benevolent legislation in some of the states, of charitable associations in others, and of general solicitude, in all. But every year witnessed an increase of their numbers, and an aggravation of the evils attaching to their anomalous relation to the

slave population of the country, on the one hand, and to the white citizens, on the other. Their example corrupted the first; and their habits of vice and idleness were a sore annoyance to the last; while their own existence which they were taught by no religious or intellectual culture to direct to any valuable end, seemed destined to prove, in the present and future world, a still heavier curse to themselves.

In devising measures for improving or altering the condition of these people, there were consequently presented, three distinct classes of evils to be provided against; each of which was calculated to interest in its redress, a numerous and intelligent class of the community. And such was the fact. The wealthy slave-holder, if moved by no worthier motive, was obliged to yield to the interested consideration of preserving the people of his plantation from an intercourse with the free blacks; which experience had unhappily proved to be injurious both to their morals and to their happiness. The effects of their improvident and predatory habits, and dissolute examples, were felt by a still more numerous class of citizens; none of whom could be wholly indifferent to the application of an appropriate remedy. And, finally, every benevolent mind could not fail to be moved by compassion for their calamitous lot, to devise some measure of effectual and permanent relief.

Thus, each of these three descriptions of persons have been heard to recommend their colonization;—but the last only, have ever evinced an efficient zeal in the cause, or contributed much important aid and encouragement towards any of those charitable measures which provide for the happiness and ulterior improvement of the objects of colonization. It would be to wrong the character of the members of the American Colonization Society, to confound, without this discrimination, the motives of its active members, with the various suggestions of interest which may have influenced individuals of very opposite characters, to declare themselves favourable to that part of their plan which proposes to remove the free blacks out of this country. This measure has been deliberately approved by the society, as essential to the execution of their benevolent purpose in respect to the free blacks themselves: and as its effects must prove highly beneficial to the American community, this consideration may very properly have its weight, in the minds of all. Still, it is maintained that the measures of this institution, have without an exception, been taken with the same tender regard to the interests of the people for whose colonization they provide, as if their accomplishment would draw in their train no advantages to any other class of the population. Their proceedings stand recorded for the perusal of the world; to which they can appeal with confi-

dence for the proof of their entire accordance with the spirit, and the precepts of the gospel. The objects of this institution stated in the order in which their accomplishment must proceed, are,

1st. The formation of a christian settlement, organised after the form of the best constituted societies, on the coast of Africa:

2dly. The transportation of as many of the free black people of this country, as shall be desirous of removing, to such settlement:

3dly. The persevering application of the best means of promoting the moral and social improvement and happiness of the colonists, and their posterity, as long as the circumstances of the latter, shall require their fostering care: and

4thly. The civilization and religious instruction, of the native African tribes.

The society was formed in January, 1817. Considering their object as strictly national, and possessing strong claims upon the patronage of Congress, the Managers submitted, in the same year, a proposition for its adoption by the general government. Their memorial was favourably received; but it has never yet been deemed advisable to press the final decision of the question which was taken on it.

During the year 1818, the mission of Messrs. Mills and Burgess, to the western coast of Africa, was performed; and a valuable accession of local information respecting the country, ob-

tained by the society, by means of their united researches. Early in the year 1819, it had become an object of immediate interest with the society, to send out a select company of black people, under suitable superintendence, to commence the contemplated settlement.

By the act of Congress of the 3d of March, of this year, the President of the United States was authorised to institute an agency in Africa, for the purpose of providing an asylum for such Africans as should be liberated by our ships of war, from vessels seized in the violation of the provisions of the same law, for the entire suppression of the slave-trade. This act, without recognising the plan of colonization as it had been repeatedly commended by the society, to the favourable notice of Congress, authorised a collateral measure so nearly identified with it, as in effect, to subserve nearly the same purpose. The passing of this act, and its benevolent bearing on the welfare of the African race, could not but be regarded by the society as a providential interposition directly propitious to their own cherished objects: and they resolved to improve the advantage which was thus offered them, by so adapting their movements, as to derive from the measures of the Government, the benefits of a formal co-operation In this view it was determined to make the station of the Government agency on the coast of Africa, the site of the colonial settlement; and to incorporate in the set-

tlement, all the blacks delivered over by our ships of war to the American Agent, as soon as the requisite preparations should be completed for their accommodation.

Mr. Bacon had been known as the decided friend of both objects: and recommended to the appointment of the Executive as the principal Agent of the Government, early in the summer of this year.

About the period of his return from the Bible mission, it was determined by the Government, to send a transport and ship of war to the coast of Africa, for the purpose of carrying out two agents, and as many mechanics and labourers as should be necessary to prepare a receptacle for any persons that might be liberated from American slave ships. Accordingly, the Sloop of War, Cyane, of 24 guns, was put in commission, and the Elizabeth, a merchant ship of three hundred tons, eventually chartered, for this service. The former was ordered to cruise on that station, for the purpose of intercepting vessels engaged in the slave-trade, under the American flag. Both of these vessels were lying at that time, in the harbour of New York.

Having received priests' orders, on the 24th of November, in Philadelphia, Mr. Bacon entered immediately into the service of the Colonization society. In this engagement he continued until the 8th of January, 1820, when he received from the Executive of the United States'

government, his commission and instructions for the agency to which he had been previously designated.

The Government had consented to receive on board the Elizabeth, such useful free black persons, recommended by the Society, as the service of the agency should require on the coast.

About thirty families, comprehending eighty-nine individuals, of different sexes, and ages, had been selected by the Society from a much greater number of applicants, for this expedition; and were now assembling in the city of New York. Mr. Bacon was instructed to proceed to that city to receive these people, equip them for the voyage, and superintend their embarkation. He accordingly left Philadelphia on the 26th of November. Under this date, on board the steam-boat, he thus writes to the venerated mother of his late wife: "My engagements were such, while in Philadelphia, that I could not find a moment's time to address you." * * * "I have parted this morning with my dear child,—my beloved relations from York, and with hundreds of praying and affectionate friends. I cannot dwell on this subject.—My heart sickens with the recollection of the painful circumstances of it. But glory to God, I do not mourn as one without hope. If I never see father, mother, child, sisters and brothers again, in this world; we have reason to glorify God and praise his holy name, that we part in body,

and but for a season,—I am determined to meet you in Heaven." * * * "O God, bless and save my child!—I desire that he may be piously brought up,—and have the benefit of a good example, and good precepts." * * * "It is my earnest desire and prayer, that God may qualify and call him to preach the gospel." * * * "I was ordained presbyter on the 24th instant, by Bishop White, in St. Peter's church, and preached on the same evening to about two thousand coloured people, in Bethel church." "My health has not been better for many years past."

On the 16th of December he writes from New York: "After a day of fatigue and anxiety, I redeem a moment from sleep, to inform my dear friend, that we are now on the point of succeeding in chartering a vessel for our voyage." "We have nameless difficulties to contend with, and numberless obstacles to surmount. Some of these arise out of the lukewarmness, some out of the hostility, and many from the avarice of men; and others from the opposition of the great enemy of all good. But the gloom begins to break away, and light to dawn upon our cause. Satan literally 'has his seat' in Africa. But we have too much reason to believe he is not confined entirely to foreign shores." * * * * * "We expect to meet him arrayed with all his force, and in readiness to oppose us, inch by inch, in Africa. But he who fights for us, we are confident, must prevail. The Lord gives

us grace; and I feel more and more disposed to prayer and earnest importunity for success in this great cause."

The mind, in reviewing a series of past events, finds it difficult so to confine its survey to the painful, or the pleasing, alone, as to admit the uncompounded feeling of pleasure, or of pain, which either, contemplated separately, is capable of producing: but calling up by the same effort of memory, the images of both, it derives from them the opposite emotions of grief and joy, and melts them into one uniform sensation. So the eye turned upon a distant landscape over which spots of light and shade are alternately scattered, admits the rays reflected from both; but so mingled and confounded together as to spread over the whole scene, a twilight uniformity of colouring. It is impossible at this period, to advert to the pleasing anticipations expressed in the following passage from a letter of the 21st of December, without painfully connecting in idea, the event by which they were so soon, and so affectingly frustrated. "Though on the eve of sailing, I am in high spirits,—quite happy, my dear mother, in my prospects, and hopeful that a sea voyage and warm climate will contribute to lengthen my days. I should not outlive three winters in this country. I find every winter wears my constitution away very fast. Were I to stay here, I should have a confirmed cough in two months.—I am happy

in the prospect of a lengthened span, and increasing usefulness."

On the 27th of December, he left New York for the city of Washington, where he arrived on the 29th, and remained until the 13th of January. This period was very usefully filled up in learning, by personal conference with the executive officers of the general government, and the managers of the Colonization society, the views of both, in reference to the interesting expedition with the direction of which he was charged. It is also due to his memory to state, that his own good sense suggested a number of important hints in relation to the undertaking, which served as the basis of some of the official instructions which he received on the occasion; and that his zeal and perseverance were happily instrumental of removing several formidable obstacles to the execution of the plan, which even then threatened, to delay it to a remote and uncertain period, and thwart some of the best hopes of its friends altogether.

To his visit to the metropolis at this time, the writer of this memoir is indebted, for the only opportunity he enjoyed, of cultivating with Mr. Bacon, a personal intercourse. Short as the term of his stay was, it proved amply sufficient to discover to the observation of those with whom he associated, many of the estimable characteristics of his mind. Such was the simplicity of his manners, and the candour of his character, as to show out

in the most natural expressions, the genuine qualities of the heart. The impression which these were capable of making on the mind of one, till then a stranger, has constituted his chief motive for engaging in the interesting labour of preparing for the world, this humble memorial of his worth. It seeks no higher merit than that of giving to one of the brightest examples of piety and christian benevolence, in the age, a just exhibition. The most striking feature in his character was the apparently entire abstraction of his thoughts and affections from every grovelling terrestrial object;—a trait evinced rather by the inimitable and peculiar sanctity, and unaffected humility of his deportment, than by any other form of expression. The most unskilful observer of the human character could hardly escape the impression, that a peace ineffable reigned in his mind, and placed it perfectly at rest, above the reach of the passions, and commotions of ordinary life, on the elevated ground of an intimate communion, and constant intercourse with God.

His breast seemed to be a sanctuary hallowed for the constant residence of the most devout, and sublimated affections of which the human soul is capable in the present world. The most natural employment of his thoughts, was prayer; and their most delightful exercise, praise. The eye of his faith had pierced through the veil of sensible things, and seemed to feed with awful

rapture, on the uncreated glory of the eternal Godhead. To such a man, death must be regarded only as the soaring of the soul to the holy object of its supreme attraction, and intimate knowledge, in the present world. The deepest wave of the last flood can hardly obscure—it cannot even for a season, extinguish, the light of the celestial vision !—Such are the reflections which the last interview of this man of God must have excited in the bosoms of many of his American friends. Wherever he moved, he carried a kind of palpable demonstration of the truth and power of the gospel, which greatly strengthened the faith, quickened the zeal, and encouraged the hopes, of the pious; and was calculated to give energy to the imperfect convictions of the careless on the subject of religion.

The methods of God's providence are mysterious and inscrutable : and all human attempts to conjecture the reasons on which the measures of his government are founded, commonly discover more of profanity and weakness, than of the exercise of a judgment enlightened and regulated by the maxims of revelation. But there is nothing merely conjectural in the supposition, that He who reads the future of every man's life and destination, does prepare for approaching scenes, by a special interposition, such as surrender themselves to the guidance of his holy Spirit. The belief is scriptural : it is also confirmed by observation. It is now easy for his friends to per-

ceive, that Mr. Bacon was at the time of his embarkation for Africa, rapidly advancing in the improving temper of his mind, through the last stages of earthly maturity for the holy society of his Saviour, and the saints in Heaven.

On the 13th of January he left Washington on his return to New York, travelling through the interior of Pennsylvania. He now visited his friends in York, for the last time. From the nature of the undertaking in which he was engaged, he indulged little expectation of ever renewing his visit to that place; and passed the three days of his stay there, in a way that well became his last. After preaching several times to the little flock from which the great Shepherd had separated him to higher services, he met them around the communion altar; and both to himself and them, the pain of a long and eventful separation appeared to be nearly excluded by the joys of christian fellowship, and communion with the Father of their spirits.

He arrived in New York, on the 19th, where his colleague, John P. Bankson, Esq. and Dr. Samuel A. Crozer, the Agent of the Colonization society soon after, joined him; and the people destined for the voyage, were already assembled. On the 20th, he thus writes to his friends in Pennsylvania: "I arrived safe, yesterday morning; and find we shall be at sea in a very few days." * * "We have some hundreds of applications from the black people which we

are obliged to refuse. "I am perfectly convinced that the Lord has led me on step by step, to qualify me for this business. You, and my dear friends, and my child, will never have cause to regret this undertaking. We are making our purchases, and lading the ship—and perhaps shall only receive the letter which you send by return of mail."

On the 30th of January, the entry in his journal states, "From the 19th, to this date, I have been incessantly engaged in purchasing and putting on board the Elizabeth, our provisions, tools, implements and other necessaries. I have preached on Sundays, in the different churches in the city. To-morrow is the day fixed for embarking the people."

Monday 31st, was an interesting day. The people assembled at the African church, to the number of several thousands, to witness the solemnities with which it was expected the embarkation would be attended, and join in a procession to the vessel then lying in the North River. But before the doors were opened, it was perceived that the rush which must follow, would endanger the lives of many of the multitude; and they were ordered to be kept shut. The concourse then moved towards the ship; but Mr. Bacon foresaw the disastrous consequences of bringing so unmanageable a concourse, as four or six thousand eager spectators, down to the verge of the river; and stopped its

further progress. He ascended a neighbouring piazza, and after fervently commending the multitude to God, and addressing them in a few appropriate words, he returned to the street, and with great address and prudence, sent the ship's people, individually, on board. The concourse still kept their ground, until the people were all secretly embarked. "The fact was not known," says Mr. Bacon, "till I announced it, to the great surprise of the multitude :—and thus probably, were numbers restrained from rushing, through inconsiderate curiosity, into a watery grave."

Before the wind proved favourable for putting to sea, the Elizabeth found herself closely ice-bound, and incapable even of dropping down into the Harbour. In this situation she remained until the 6th of February, when a passage was opened through the ice, and the ship run out to sea, with a fair wind. The crew were all in good health, at this date ; and manifested a harmonious and subordinate spirit. The agents were animated with a common principle of benevolence and zeal ; and many of the emigrants appeared influenced by the religion which a majority of the most influential, professed to have embraced with a true faith.

In the organisation of this service, Messrs. Bacon and Bankson had been appointed collegiate Agents of the Government of the United States, to whom the direction of the expedition

was entrusted. The people were all considered as attached to this joint agency, and to remain entirely subject to its controul, as long after their arrival on the coast, as their services should be needful, or until they should receive a regular discharge. Their official instructions required them to make the island of Sherbro, on the coast of Africa, their first place of destination, and either there, or in some more eligible situation, to land the people and stores, and proceed to erect cottages for the accommodation of themselves, and at least, three hundred captured Africans. They were likewise instructed to plant and cultivate corn and vegetables; and contribute by their own industry, to subsist and defray the expenses of the establishment.

Mr. Samuel A. Crozer was the sole Agent of the Colonization society; who was entrusted with the goods and stores sent out by the society, for the purposes of conciliating the favour of the native chiefs, purchasing lands, and ministering to the health and comfort of the people. The selection and purchase of a territory for the contemplated settlement, were committed to this agent; who was instructed to avail himself of the advice and good offices of the agents appointed on the part of the Government. In planning this expedition, great confidence had been reposed in the statements of Messrs. Mills and Burgess in relation to the friendly disposition of the natives on and near the Sher-

bro River; the salubrity of the climate; and the eligibility of the site which they had recommended for a place of settlement. The instructions of the agents were framed in a general conformity with their recommendations. It is only to be regretted that those gentlemen had not spent a longer period in that country, explored the coast more extensively, and used the means of acquiring a more exact and certain knowledge of the different subjects on which they were obliged to report. The instructions of the agents had been drawn up under an erroneous impression, as to the true state of several of these particulars; and to this cause must be partially attributed the fatal miscarriage of the expedition.

The subsequent extracts from Mr. Bacon's journal of the voyage, discover it to have been marked with some circumstances of an unpropitious and eventful character. "Monday, February 7th, 1820. Still lying to, off the high lands of Neversink, waiting for the Cyane who is still within the Light. The people were comfortably lodged through the night. We soon got under way, and proceeded to sea. The wind was fair most of the day, and carried us forward at the rate of ten miles an hour. Nearly all the people on board are seasick." "February 8th. The people are recovering from their sickness. The weather is still favourable. The evening closed in cheer-

ful worship of God in the steerage, by the emigrants; neither of the agents being well enough to be present." "February 10th. At night, it began to blow, and the gale became tremendous; which lasted till morning. The awful scene we passed through is not to be described. I however, never lost sight of the promises of God; and never, for a moment, doubted of our eventual arrival on the coast of Africa; but through much tribulation and distress. I still felt it a duty to pray continually and earnestly, and felt an unshaken reliance in the efficacy of the prayers of the church of God. I considered God had entered into covenant with his church, to answer their prayers for its success. Christ is the head of the church; he must prevail, and so must all the faithful prayers of his people. I found it sweet to be here, and did rejoice in the dominion of God." "February 11th. A little before sun-set, the wind began to rise; and it soon blew a gale, more severe, if possible, than in the preceding night." We shipped nearly a hundred seas,—some of which were very heavy. The binnacle was washed off, and compasses broken. Sometimes the ship was before the wind;—sometimes she was rolling in the trough of the sea; sometimes they lost all command of her. During the latter part of the night, they hove to, and we rolled about till daylight, when the wind abated. These three last nights were awful ones indeed; but in the midst

of the dangers,—when every sea seemed to be about to swallow us up,—and every fresh blast of wind stronger than the last; in the midst of all, I rejoiced in God and in the 'help of his countenance.' I could ask myself, whether there was another place in the universe, I would prefer to be in, at that moment?—and I desire to give glory to God, that I could say, there was none. Duty had called me here; God was with me; and I was happy. A covenant God; a triumphant Saviour; a holy Bible; and a peaceful conscience,—all how precious!" "February 12th. We have a calm sea, and the people were on deck, and seemed to gain new life and spirits. We have prayers in the cabin, morning and evening. We fell in with the wreck of the Schooner 'Elizabeth, of Boston.' The Mate boarded her, and found no one on board. We lay to for some time, in hope of falling in with some of her crew in her long boat. A general sentiment of gratitude seemed to pervade our people, that the Elizabeth, of New York (our ship) was not in a similar condition."

On the 16th, having the prospect of speaking a ship bound into the United States, Mr. Bacon wrote to his friends in Pennsylvania:

"We are proceeding rapidly towards the place of our destination, with a delightful breeze and charming weather. The thermometer in our companion-way, is standing at 66 de-

grees." "We have now been out ten days. We parted from the Cyane going out of the harbour of New York, and have not heard of her since." "We have little to say in relation to the behaviour of our people, except in their commendation. No accident has occurred since we came out of port, to damp our spirits. Every thing seems to be as it should be. Harmony prevails.—We want only more gratitude."

In consequence of the recommendation of the agents, the Rev. Daniel Coker, on the 18th, formed a society in conformity to the Methodist discipline; consisting of twenty-five communicants. Three magistrates had likewise been appointed for the preservation of order among the emigrants, and the protection of their respective rights.

"February 19th. We have continued our consultations for the good of our charge. It is determined to call our colony by the name of the country where it shall be established." * * * "To-day I was able to preach in the steerage: and gave notice of two services on next Sabbath; we also notified a fast on the same day, and a general thanksgiving when we should arrive in sight of Africa."

Mr. Bacon here relates a perilous scene of confusion and strife between some of the officers of the ship, and a part of the passengers, in consequence of the very reprehensible misconduct of the latter; in which the authority of the

master came near being overpowered by the violence of the people. The interference of the agents was, at first, altogether unavailing to quell the disorder; but by a prudent decision of conduct on their part, seconded by the forbearance of the officers of the vessel, the difference was, through the blessing of God, happily composed without the necessity of proceeding to those extreme measures which the case seemed at first, too likely to provoke. The unlucky dogs that had been the cause of the commotion which threatened so serious a termination, were thrown overboard; and no overt act of insubordination on the part of the people, was repeated during the remainder of the voyage. In reference to this affair, Mr. Bacon, with his usual piety, states: "At one moment, there was great appearance of a general engagement between the ship's crew and emigrants; in which case many lives would have been lost, and the ship exposed to be cast away for want of persons capable of navigating her. It was a great instance of God's mercy that we were not ruined in a moment. Blessed be his name, that we were saved from self-destruction."

"February 25th. This day we observed as a season of fasting and prayer. I preached in the morning, from Ezra viii. verses 21, 22, 23. God gave me his assistance; and we had a profitable season. Several of the coloured preachers and exhorters continued the

services through the day. Peter Small, the chief actor in the late disturbance, apologised for his conduct, and we have had a day of quiet and harmony; I bless the Lord for all His mercies, especially for the peace which he has restored to us."

A dangerous leak was providentially discovered and stopped, on the 1st of March, which had, for several days, filled the ship's hold at the rate of twenty-four inches in an hour.

It was but too apparent that a mutinous spirit was secretly working in the minds of some of the people on board; who waited only to be landed in Africa, in order to vent it in such acts of personal hostility to the agents, and of direct resistance to their authority, as would subvert the very design of the expedition. In order to test the temper of the people, and if possible, to anticipate any unruly proceedings which might grow out of it, when it should become necessary to subject them to a more rigid controul than the circumstances had hitherto required, Mr. Crozer published on the same day, the instructions of the society, in relation to the apportionment of lands,* in the contemplated settlement. This was accompanied with a full explanation of the relation which the people sustained to the Colonization society, and to the government of the United States, respectively; and of the obliga-

* See Appendix, Note VII.

tions and duties, mutually attaching to them and the directors of the expedition. Indications of strong disaffection were, on this occasion, manifested by a few individuals; but a large majority acquiesced in the authority of the agents, at the time; and the dissatisfied persons in a few days afterwards, apologised for their contumacy, and petitioned to be restored to confidence. The journal proceeds:

"March 2d. At half past ten, land was discovered over our lee-bow—the ship standing S. E. It proved to be the Islands of Fuego and Brava, the most western of the Cape Verds. We were unable to weather them, and are now becalmed a little to leeward of them."

"March 7th. We are now on soundings. A Sunday school was formed on board the ship to-day: Bibles were distributed to the crew; and I gave to each a prayer-book. They appeared grateful for them."

"March 8th. We enjoy uninterrupted quiet on board: and are one hundred and twenty miles to the north-west of Cape Sierra Leone." A variety of orders were issued to regulate the intercourse of the people with the colonists of Sierra Leone; and appointments distributed among them, principally with a view to secure their attachment to the service. A committee of three, was dignified with the title of "Members of Council;" another was called, the "Committee of Trade:" To these were likewise ad-

ded a "Register of Public Acts," and a "Colonial Secretary." This measure was productive of a very happy effect, and reflects credit on the good sense of the agents.

"March 9th. At nine o'clock this morning," the journal states, "We discovered the highlands in the neighbourhood of Cape Sierra Leone: and on entering the harbour of Freetown, about three o'clock in the evening, were boarded by a canoe carrying several Kroo-men, who perform nearly all the hard labour of the town. This race of people are remarkably large and well proportioned, and generally, have fine intelligent countenances. Their country is on the Guinea coast, in latitude about 5 degrees N. whence they sail in their canoes to the different European posts on the coast, and hire themselves at the rate of four dollars per month: and are frequently absent from home for several years. Their whole dress, when employed in their work, consists of a single piece of cotton, or bafta. Our people clothed those who came on board, decently. At four o'clock, we dropped our anchor in the harbour of Sierra Leone. We were immediately visited by a number of officers from shore; and saw several American emigrants brought out some years since, by Captain Paul Cuffee; all of whom were respectable in their appearance, and happy in their circumstances. Our sick have all recovered, and passengers and crew enjoy perfect health. We spent the evening

on board, in acts of thanksgiving and praise. Surely we have reason for gratitude."

CHAP. X.

It is due to the zeal, good judgment, and uniform fidelity of the Rev. Daniel Coker, of the Methodist church, who went out in the Elizabeth, and of the value of whose services, both during the voyage, and on the coast, the agents made very honourable mention, and the society have received the most substantial proofs, to observe in anticipation, that he has continued to the present time, to justify, by a consistent course of upright and discreet conduct, the confidence reposed in him.

On the 10th, Mr. Bacon, and his colleagues went ashore; and, as the natural history, and a local knowledge of Africa, are becoming subjects of general interest in this country, the extracts from his journal are here continued.

"We visited the market. It was too late for meat or fish;—but tropical fruits and vegetables were abundant. We saw bananas, plantains, pine-apples, oranges, limes, guavas, rice, cassada, yams, sweet-potatoes and other productions of the country." "Several small beeves were grazing in the streets; and all quite fat." "The market-women seemed to be all Kroos or Timinies." "Myself, with two others again went on shore about four o'clock, and strolled down to the Kroo-men's village. Oh,

what a field for evangelical labour amongst them! How lamentable that these fine people do not attract the notice of the religious world. We passed their hamlet, and saw hundreds of them engaged in a variety of sports and amusements." The following extracts of a letter to a friend in Philadelphia, are in continuation of the same subject. "You may depend on it, there is work for us here: there is work for Missionaries; for teachers; for good men of all descriptions." "I am struck with wonder at the appearance of the native Africans. The sickly and depressed countenance of a Philadelphia coloured man, is not to be seen amongst them. A noble aspect,—a dignified mien,—a frank and open countenance, the entire demeanor of the wild man! Sir, it is worth a voyage to Africa to see the Kroo-men. I was present at one of their amusements, not much unlike your opera performances. The speakers were accompanied by a pleasant music on a sort of shepherd's pipe. There were more than one hundred present; and seated on the ground in a circle. The speakers and actors had their places in the centre. I could not understand them. I remained some time speculating about the origin of this. I could almost persuade myself that they were fast becoming civilized! as theatrical amusements seem to indicate a state of civilization above the savage life. I suppose the play I saw, and those performed in Philadelphia have, the

one, about as much religion as the other." "These people never sell each other for slaves, nor suffer any others to do it. Being faithful to themselves, they have none of those sufferings to endure which other tribes feel with so great severity."

"March 11th. I again went on shore, for the purpose of visiting Leicester Mountain; but twice missed my way, and returned. I passed six or seven native villages, and asked for water at as many different huts. I always met with the most friendly reception. The natives manifest much benevolence of feeling." "March 12th. I preached at 10 o'clock, on the ship's deck.—Several coloured men fron Sierra Leone, were present." "The ship's crew were very attentive, and seemed impressed with sacred truth. At one o'clock I called by appointment on governor M'Carthy, and met with a civil reception." "One half the coloured population here would instantly emigrate if we would receive them. This we shall of course, prevent. Religion is in a languishing state in Freetown."

"March 13th. Dining to day with the colonial governor, our table was entirely and sumptuously supplied, from the productions of Africa. Those of no country are more various; and still the greater part are of spontaneous growth." "The English have claims on all that part of the coast, which stretches from Sierra Leone to the Gambia, north; and as far as Cape Shilling,

perhaps beyond it, south." "Oh Africa, my heart bleeds for thee, and thy scattered and weeping children! Is it not of the justice of God, that we, the white people, cannot well exist in this climate? God only can keep it for Africa!"

At the last preceding date, the Cyane had not arrived in Sierra Leone. The charter-party of the Elizabeth gave the agents no authority to detain that ship beyond a very few days on the coast. Not only a place of settlement, but even of debarkation, was yet to be sought, for the passengers and stores. Kizzel, an African of some consideration on the coast, and the proprietor of a small settlement on the Island of Sherbro, in whom, from the recommendations of Messrs. Mills and Burgess, the confidence of the agents had been unsuspectingly reposed, was at his residence, forty leagues distant from Sierra Leone. The soundings near the entrance of the Sherbro, had not been taken; and great doubt was entertained as to the practicability of bringing the ship down to Kizzel's settlement, from the shoalness of the water. Under these circumstances Mr. Bankson was immediately despatched in a small vessel, to explore the Sherbro sound, and provide a suitable place for the landing of the stores, and for the accommodation of the people, until a site should be chosen, and lands obtained, for their permanent establishment. In order the more effectually to

execute the purposes of the expedition, Mr. Bacon on the 17th, purchased the Augusta, a shooner of one hundred tons' burden, on board of which a part of the Elizabeth's freight was transferred on the same day; and both vessels immediately proceeded to sea. Having doubled cape Sierra Leone, the vessels proceeded towards the entrance of the Sherbro sound, where the Elizabeth, unable to proceed further with safety, anchored on the 18th. The schooner, in running too near the shore, grounded; by which she sustained a trifling injury; but was got off on the same day.

Mr. Bankson having returned on board, from his visit to Kizzel's residence, made a report highly favourable to the wishes of his colleagues, both as to the facilities for landing, and the conveniences for accommodating the people, and depositing the stores, at that place. Kizzel had likewise tendered the best use of his interest with the King and head-men of the adjacent coast, in opening with them, an immediate negotiation for the lands, and bringing it to a speedy issue. Animated by these flattering prospects, the agents made immediate preparations for the trans-shipment of the stores and people, from the Elizabeth, to Kizzel's town. The distance was about six leagues.

March 20th, Mr. Bacon arrived off Campelar, the place of Kizzel's settlement. "At half past ten," he states, "I went on shore and

was received with joy by Mr. Kizzel and his people. He wept as we walked together, to his house. I dined with him on fish and rice, dressed with palm oil. Our people were sent on shore, in boats. We unladed our schooner, and sent back Mr. Bankson to the ship for the stores. All the people got fixed during the day, in the huts provided by Mr. Kizzel; and at seven o'clock, we all went into the little church and had a joyful season of evening prayer. About twenty native Africans, nearly naked, were present. The sight of natives mingling in our morning and evening worship, and even joining in the tune, and some of the words of our songs of praise, was a refreshing one. Mr. Kizzel is a pious man;* and has kept up worship amongst them a long time. I exhorted in English, and he in Sherbro. This was an affecting season of devotion! It was worth living an age to participate in it, with our feelings!"

The Cyane having arrived at Sierra Leone, immediately despatched a boat to Campelar, for Mr. Bacon, whose advice was necessary to be taken in relation to her future employment on the coast. Mr. Bacon accordingly left Campelar on the 24th; and touching at the residence of George Caulker, the proprietor of the Plantian Islands, he thus describes his interview with this

* Mr. Bacon was unhappily obliged before his death, either to reverse, or greatly modify his charitable judgment of the piety of this individual.

African chieftain. A considerable part of his wealth has been amassed by means of the inhuman traffic in the persons of his countrymen.

"On our arrival at the Plantains, about twelve at night, Caulker was in bed: he was awakened, and received us at the gate of his fortress. He had a white robe wrapped about him; and wore a turban of figured cambrick. His reception of us was friendly. His house is covered with thatch in the native style; but has, in the centre, one room finished in the European manner. He gave up to Lieut. Stringham and myself, his own bed-room, and afforded a comfortable accommodation to the boat-men. He has the air and manners of a Scottish chieftain. He was evidently suspicious of the motives of our visit, and was far from approving our errand to the coast. He has a battery of five dismounted guns, a high wall on two sides of his inclosure, and ranges of houses on the other sides. He is a man of intelligence; genteel in his address; has many wives; and possesses considerable influence."

Mr. Bacon arrived on board the Cyane in the harbour of Sierra Leone on the 26th. It was Sunday; and he was obliged to pass the evening amidst the unseasonable festivity of a dining party, in which the principal officers of the English colony had been invited to join. The effect of this profanation, on his feelings, is noticed with emphasis in his journal. The next

day, it was arranged, that the schooner Augusta should be manned from the Cyane, and the command of her delivered to Midshipman Townsend; while the ship proceeded to prosecute her cruise, and return to the United States.

On the 28th, Messrs. Bacon, Townsend, and six men from the Cyane, accordingly, left Sierra Leone, in an open boat; and arrived at Campelar on the 30th.

From this date to the 3d of April, the agents were occupied in superintending and assisting in the unlading of the Elizabeth, in the erection of store-houses for the goods, and providing for the accommodation and comfort of the people.

The Island of Sherbro is separated from that part of the coast which bears the same name, by a sound navigable for small vessels, and from one and a half to four leagues broad. Into this sound fall several rivers which admit of boat navigation from five to thirty miles from their mouth. This Island is about ten leagues in length, and is covered with a luxuriant vegetable growth: but it consists wholly of alluvial ground, and like the whole adjacent coast, rises but a few feet above the level of the sea. Campelar is situated near the middle of the Island, on the east side: and the ground on which it stands, with much of the contiguous country, is during the rains, extensively inundated. In addition to the manifest insalubrity of its situation, the water is so strongly impregnated with for-

eign substances as to be rendered highly offensive to the taste. The agents had notwithstanding these forbidding circumstances, been inveigled into an arrangement with the proprietor of the spot, by which the people were to remain upon it, while the negotiations for the lands were proceeding, by the most positive assurances of its salubrity on the part of Kizzel, and a promise of effectual assistance in bringing the native chiefs to an early conference with the agents.

The dominion of the whole Sherbro country is distributed among a number of petty chiefs, who all acknowledge to their king, a subjection which is nearly nominal; and possess an absolute right of government in their respective districts. A sort of paternal respect is shown by the people to these head-men; while a great degree of personal freedom is enjoyed; and no important act of government, or judicial decision, in which the former are generally interested, takes place, without the concurrence of the elders of the tribe.

The territory which had been designated by the former agents on the coast, and was the object of the approaching negotiation, commenced about thirty miles from Campelar, at the head of boat navigation on the Bagroo river. King Fara, who resided on the Island of Sherbro, was the reputed proprietor of the tract; but was unable to cede it, without the consent and advice of king Sherbro and the chiefs.

Mr. Bacon soon perceived in Kizzel, a disposition for which he was not able satisfactorily to account, to procrastinate the general council, which he had promised his aid to obtain: and, on the 3d of April, he ascended a small river about ten miles from the sound, in order to visit the chief, Fara, at his own residence. Of his reception by Fara, and the conference which ensued, he gives the following relation:

"We were received, and seated in the 'palaver' or council house, on native mats. The king and head-men of his tribe, were arranged on the opposite side; and after our presents had been produced and accepted, the 'palaver' began. "I stated through Mr. Kizzel, the objects of our visit to Africa and the improvement and benefits likely to accrue to the native tribes, from our religion, agriculture, and the mechanic arts. He listened to my words; said they were all true; and professed to be highly gratified. He said he owned the land where we wanted to sit down; and would sell it: but king Sherbro must first be consulted as he was the king of the whole country. He promised to come in two days, to Campelar and give me further information." "I am more and more pleased with the Sherbro people. They are kind and attentive to our wants. This country is capable of becoming a continued garden. My health is excellent: I know not that it was ever better."

Anxious to secure the lands with the least possible delay, and apprehensive that the professions of Kizzel ought not to be confided in, Mr. Bacon proceeded on the next day, to the principal town of Somano, the chief of Bendou, situated on the left of the sound, about twenty miles south of Campelar. Professions of good will, and a promise of concurring in any grant of lands which should be agreed upon in a council of the chiefs, were obtained from this chief without difficulty; but Mr. Bacon was able to obtain no assurance of an early 'palaver.'

"After our interview with the chiefs," he continues, "we walked several miles into the country. The head-man, Tasso, was our guide, who took good care to tell us under what trees the 'greegres' were; and that if we went where they were, we should get a variety of distempers. He showed us a collection of native medicines, and explained their uses." "I never saw a country of equal fertility. The most luxuriant growth of cotton trees, currant trees, lime and orange trees, and a variety of timber trees and shrubbery; together with bananas, plantains, cassadas, yams, ground-nuts, sweet-potatoes, and acres covered with pine-apple plants, lined our walks for miles. Tasso was very friendly,—introduced us to his wife; lamented that he had no palm wine for me; and promised to visit Campelar." "On my journey

down, we stopped at Mrs. Andersons, on York Island, and found the largest oranges I ever saw. I got one that measured fifteen inches in circumference." "I could not fail to admire the beautiful healthy children in numerous groups, wherever we go. King Fara said yesterday, he would come if *God pleases*;—a mode of speech worthy of a christian."

On Mr. Bacon's return from this excursion, he was much afflicted to find that several of the people at Campelar, had, during the day, exhibited unequivocal symptoms of a violent attack of fever. These consisted of pains in the head, back, and limbs, attended with inflammation of the eyes, lassitude, and depression of spirits. On the next day, the number of sick amounted to fifteen. The trans-shipment and landing of the Elizabeth's freight was not yet completed, and fully occupied the other agents; while Mr. Bacon was employed in providing shelter for the goods and people, ashore. The latter began to manifest the utmost impatience to remove from Campelar, on account both of the badness of the water, and the apprehended insalubrity of the situation.

The agents had found no leisure since their arrival at Campelar, to organise the different departments of the service; and by assigning to the people their respective employments and duties, to avail themselves sufficiently of their aid in sustaining the burden of labour which pressed

upon their own shoulders. The consequence was, that their strength was exhausted with incessant bodily exertion, and imprudent exposure to the direct rays of a vertical sun, through the day, and the damps of pestilential exhalations at night. Many of the black people at the same time, would scarcely give themselves the trouble properly to prepare their own food; by their indolence manifestly inviting disease, and laying open the system to the worst effects of the malignant properties of the water and climate. But there were moral evils scarcely less formidable, daily becoming more apparent in consequence of the general idleness. It afforded to the seeds of dissatisfaction which had never been entirely eradicated from their minds, a prolific growth. Scarcely a circumstance of their lot, but administered some pretext of complaint against the agents. The following picture of the distressing scene which was now presented, is thus sketched by Mr. Bacon, on the 6th of April: "We have now twenty-one sick of a fever. We try the country practice of bathing, and find it succesful in some cases. We have not tried it sufficiently, fully to attest its efficacy. The schooner is now absent for the remainder of the freight; and Dr. Crozer is with her. Mr. Bankson is sick;—I suppose on board the vessel. I have heard the complaints of the people this day, because there is no good water to be had on the Island,—because they were brought to this place,—because

I did not take possession of the land by force,—because the people are visited with sickness,—because there is not fresh meat, sugar, molasses, flour and other luxuries to be distributed to them,—because I have not shoes and clothing for them,—because I cannot give them better tobacco,—because the 'palaver' is not over,—because I take the best measures I can, to bring it to a conclusion,—because the houses are not better,—and because they have meat and bread to eat. They complain of every thing they have; and are clamorous for every thing they have not. We erected one additional house, today for our people; and have two store-houses already finished, in which our provisions and goods are tolerably secure."

"We have suffered much from the depredations of our own people! Even our high-toned professors have been repeatedly detected in petty thefts, falsehood, and mischiefs of the most disgraceful nature. I am pained to the heart, with these indications of gross hypocrisy.—It is a dark picture: but its shades are truth."

On the evening of the 7th, the number of sick had increased to twenty-five. What added to the distress was, the absence of Mr. Crozer, who was almost the only individual attached to the service capable of prescribing and preparing the necessary medicines with a scientific knowledge of their uses. Mr. Bacon gave his own personal attendance to the sick: and administered with

his own hand, the best remedies which he could devise. In these offices, he was employed during the day, and through a great part of the night. On the same day he preached to those in health, preparatory to the communion; and addressed the natives through Kizzel.

April 8th, was a day of aggravated distress. The schooner returned, bringing back Messrs. Bankson, Crozer, and Townsend, all severely ill; as were also two of the schooner's crew. Five more on shore, were added to the number of the sick, reported the day before;—making in all, thirty-five. Of these much the greater part were adult persons. The most useful of the colonists were, nearly to an individual, in the number. Twenty-five of the sick exhibited symptoms of a dangerous character; and all, appeared to be hourly getting worse. Almost the whole care of the sick, as well as of those in health, now devolved on this agent! "I passed the day," he writes, "in visiting the sick, inquiring into their wants, and administering medicines. Wherever I move, I meet with little besides groans, and tears. The fever is bilious; and in many cases, attended with delirium. Among the causes of the sickness, I reckon the following, as the principal. A too free use of the country fruits;—the neglect of personal cleanliness;—alternate exposure to the sun, and dampness of the night;—the want of flooring to the huts;—constitutions not seasoned to the climate; and

in the case of those employed about the schooner, excessive fatigue, and anxiety of mind, and remaining for hours in the water, and in wet clothes, while landing the goods. Many of the sick obstinately refuse to take medicines; some declaring, they will sooner die than submit to do it."

To a person placed in Mr Bacon's circumstances, at this period, and actuated by his disinterested and benevolent spirit, it is not to be supposed, that a prudential regard for his own health would occur with sufficient force, to occasion any relaxations in his attentions to others. The following enumeration of duties which he undertook at this time daily to perform, shows, but too clearly, that he imposed upon himself, a task to which human strength is utterly unequal. Some of the privations and labours to which he submitted, manifestly appear to have been imprudent and unnecessary. But it would be improper too severely to censure in him a fault which few besides would be liable to commit. "Who can describe the burden under which I am obliged to struggle, in feeding this people,—enduring their complaints,—listening to their tales of trouble,—inquiring into their sufferings,—administering medicine,—labouring with my own hands in building houses for them,—and toiling at the oar, and handling casks, in unloading the vessel and landing the goods!—In addition to all this, I have the spiri-

tual concerns of the whole company to look after. I go without stockings, entirely,—often without shoes;—scarcely wear a hat, and am generally without a coat;—I am up early, and not in bed until ten, or eleven o'clock. I eat little, and seldom use any other refreshments except hard ship-bread, salt meat and water." "I labour more,—am more exposed to heat, and wet, and damp, and hunger, and thirst, than any one; and yet, blessed be God, I continue in health." "In addition to all this, I have the weight of the whole interest on my mind:—all the care,—all the responsibility,—all the anxiety. But God be praised, I have peace within." "There are eight entire families sick; amongst whom there is not one able to dress his own food, or wait upon a child. Oh God who *can* help, but thou?"

Mr. Bacon found time to annex to this affecting recital of his personal anxieties, and the common sufferings, the following postscript. "Is it asked, do I yet say 'colonize Africa?' I reply, yes. He that has seen ninety native Africans landed together in America, and remarked the effects of the change of climate through the first year, has seen them as sickly as these. Every sudden and unnatural transition produces illness. The surprising fertility of the African soil, the mildness of the climate, during a great part of the year, the numerous commercial advantages, the stores of fish, and herds of

animals, to be found here, invite her scattered children home.—As regards myself, I counted the cost of engaging in this service before I left America. I came to these shores *to die:* and any thing better than death is better than I expect."

The 9th of April was Sunday. "At the very hour," he continues, "I have been accustomed to listen to, and aid in the praises of God, I am hearkening to the groans, and mingling my sighs with those of the sick and afflicted. Having preached a preparatory sermon on Thursday evening, I to-day administered the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper to those of the Episcopal church, and six of the Methodist: and we had a sweet season."

His colleague, Mr. Bankson, and several of the people, were delirious through the day: none appear to have passed the crisis of their disorder; and a few new cases occurred. Those who returned sick in the schooner, had not been removed on shore; and it was determined, at Mr. Crozer's and Mr. Townsend's request, to send her to Sierra Leone, with the sick on board, for medical assistance;—the three effective seamen, with what attention Mr. Townsend could bestow, undertaking to navigate her. But the wind standing for two days, in an unfavourable quarter, it became at that time impracticable to move her.

On the 10th, the commencement of the wet season was indicated by two or three violent gusts of thunder and wind, succeeded by transient showers of rain.

The people discovered the utmost impatience to be removed from Campelar, and even intimated in a written memorial which they presented, an intention to take the direction of their affairs into their own hands. They were assembled and remonstrated with; after which, their groundless agitation subsided, and their disorderly purpose was abandoned.

It had now become apparent, that their faithless host, Kizzel, had employed a secret influence to produce and aggravate the disaffection of the people. Mr. Bacon determined to rely no longer on his mediation, or agency, in conducting the negotiations; and proceeded on the 11th to visit Kong Kouber, a prince and son of king Sherbro, at his own town, on the Bagroo. The interview was productive of no immediate results; but discovered a disposition in the prince to admit of no unnecessary delay in bringing forward the general 'palaver.' Mr. Bacon returned on the 12th, and found the sickness not in the least abated. Mr. Crozer committed his agency in form, to the Rev. Daniel Coker; and awaited the closing scene of life, with composure.

The next day one of the sick on shore died: and new cases occurred. Mr. Townsend came on deck, during the preceding night in a fit of

delirium, and fell overboard. He was with difficulty rescued; but had the violence of his fever increased by the accident. At night, Mr. Bacon states: "There are only six or eight of the people in health—and the sick cannot be properly taken care of. I am still well, and enjoy the supreme protection and favour of God."

On the 14th, occurred another death. Mr. Bacon found time to add; "We have been in hourly expectation of Mr. Crozer's death. God be praised, I am yet well: but am continually engaged,—continually. Every duty—administering medicine, nursing the sick, praying over them, burying the dead, serving out provisions, and hearing complaints—all—all, still fall, upon me. But God helps me."

"April 15th. Our whole number of sick is nearly forty. Mr. Crozer died, about one o'clock on board the Augusta. I was engaged in prayer by his side when he expired. This is a season of grief, indeed. He said a few days ago, that 'Jesus was precious to him, but less so than he could wish.' These are dark seasons. Mr. Townsend's case is hopeless. Others are very low. Grace alone, could enable me to bear up under afflictions like these. O God, send us thy help."

The 16th, was marked by the death of Midshipman John S. Townsend, and one of the sick on shore. The remains of Messrs. Crozer and Townsend, were carried to the grave by the

American seamen of the Augusta, and buried with the honours of war. Mr. Bankson was supposed to be convalescent, and at twelve o'clock, removed on shore. Mr. Doughen, a young gentleman who went out under Mr. Bacon's patronage; and who had hitherto retained his health, became ill: and he was himself considerably indisposed, at night.

Under the date of the succeeding day, Mr. Bacon inserts the following memorandum. "I was yesterday indisposed; and am to-day more so. I have taken an emetic, and otherwise prepared for the illness which seems to be approaching."

While confined to his room he was able to adjust the current accounts of the expedition, with the assistance of an amanuensis; and enter in the books an imperfect copy, with his own hand.

The following are the last notes which he was able to write. They are feebly traced with a pencil in characters which are barely legible:

"April 19th. The wife of Augustin died last night, and was buried to-day. Mr. Coker and Kizzel started to day, for Yonie, with the goods appropriated for carrying on the 'palaver,' in order to hasten it." * * * "I last night, contracted a slight cold,—have used the warm bath, and some gentle medicines; and feel a little relieved. I have been careful not to weaken my stomach and digestive organs, by too copious

draughts, especially of water;—as that indulgence carried off Mr. Crozer, Townsend, and others." * * * *

"April 20th. Still sick." * * * *

"* * * 21st. The same." * * * *

"* * * 22d. * * same." * * * *

The sufferings of the people were now arrived at that extreme point which hardly admits of being exceeded. Mr. Doughen was confined to his couch: Mr. Bankson, although recovering, was still incapable even of administering to his own personal wants. The only three persons sufficiently intelligent to take the proper oversight of the affairs of the people, superintend the administration of medicines, and direct to such means as were requisite to their comfort and recovery, were necessarily sent to Yonie, to meet the native kings who had agreed to assemble at that place. The anxiety which this state of things created in Mr. Bacon's mind could not fail greatly to enhance his sufferings, and accelerate the crisis of his disorder. He distinctly expressed more concern on account of the sufferings of the people, and the darkening prospects of the enterprise, than on account of his own illness. In contemplating his own death, he saw little, except a bright and boundless expanse of glory piercing with its light the gloom which hung over the dying scene. But his heart was wrung with the anticipation of the event, as it would affect the welfare of the

colonists, and the success of the expedition. On this theme he had vented his feelings in the most pathetic language. But even in this heaviest, and doubtless his last trial, he found relief by a vigorous effort of faith in the mercy of God: and by ultimately confiding in the wisdom and righteousness of all his purposes. The last expression of the pungent sensations which arose out of this survey of a prospect so dark and distressing, recorded by his pen, is accompanied with the petition, manifestly dictated by the fervent wishes of his heart,—"Thy will be done."

From the 22d, to the 28th of April, there was no intelligent friend to observe the progress of his symptoms, or administer the medicines and comforts which their varying characteristics demanded. He had consigned himself to the hands of his God; and waited submissively, the result of his afflictive dispensation.

To be obliged to censure, where it would be a pleasure to commend, is painful: and to accuse of neglecting the ordinary offices of humanity, those who have deserved and possessed our gratitude, is doubly wounding to the heart. Our people have, both before and subsequently to this date, received favours from individuals, and the government of Sierra Leone, which have called forth public expressions of gratitude. But why, at the period of these occurrences, and for several weeks afterwards, was no medical aid tendered,—why,

when urgently solicited, was it *denied*, to our sick and dying people, by their English neighbours? Sierra Leone was at that time, healthy: and it was a matter of notoriety, that the only medical gentleman attached to the American expedition, had died at an early period of the sickness. On the 28th, a small vessel from Freetown anchored in sight of Campelar. A barge was despatched from her with two individuals, who proved to be servants of the colonial government of Sierra Leone; and one of them, an acting physician. They were welcomed with joy. But after announcing, as the object of their visit, some trivial, and obviously incredible matter of trade,—making a leisurely survey of the calamitous circumstances of the people, and displaying the utmost indifference to their sufferings, they returned on the same evening, to their vessel. The intreaties of those in health, seconded by the tears, and cries of the sick and dying, had been addressed to them in vain, for medical attendance—and even for advice, as to the mode of treatment proper for the disease. Both were refused. After much intreaty, they reluctantly consented to receive Mr. Bacon into their schooner, and convey him the next day, to Sierra Leone; and for that purpose promised to keep their vessel in its station, until nine o'clock, on the following morning, when it was agreed, that he should be sent on board, in his own boat. Accordingly, on the morning of the 29th, he

was conveyed in a very debilitated state, from Campelar, and arrived at the anchorage ground, before the hour appointed for the sailing of the schooner. But on the approach of the boat, the vessel drew up her anchor, and set sail for Sierra Leone! Mr. Bacon ordered the men at the oars to overtake her; and the lightness of the wind, for a season, favoured the effort. A press of sail was, however, set; and though followed at a moderate distance for several hours, the vessel at length ran so far ahead as to set the exertions of the boat-men at defiance.* It was now noon. Mr. Bacon had been exposed to the direct rays of the sun, for six hours, with no better covering than a silk umbrella; nor was it possible to regain a better shelter, before night. He ordered the men to direct their course towards the Plantain Islands; where the boat arrived in the evening of the same day. After resting through the night, Mr. Bacon was carried aboard the boat, early in the morning of the 30th, and passed the whole of another day in the same exposed condition as he had done the preceding. His fever had now attained a degree of violence which almost deprived him of the power of speech; and rendered him apparently insensible to passing occurrences. On the evening of this day he was landed at the recent English settlement on Cape Shilling; and very hospitably re-

* See Appendix, Note VIII.

ceived by Captain William Randle, the superintendant of the station. Every requisite attention was bestowed upon him by that gentleman, and his family; and his mind appeared soothed by the kindness which was evinced. But remedies came too late to do him good.

During the next day, he was able to recline for short intervals on a sofa; and to take a small part in the conversation. But his disorder was hastening rapidly, to a fatal termination. He perceived it, and expressed in the intervals of his sensibility, his acquiescence in the sovereign pleasure of God. The cause in which he had embarked retained a strong interest in his affections, to the last. In his last conversation, he feebly asked, "Dear Brother Randle, do you not think we have happiness reserved that will———?" As the interrogatory was unfinished, the gentleman to whom it was addressed, did not immediately reply: when, Mr. Bacon continued, "What do you say to my question?" A hope was then expressed, that the Saviour would reserve for both, a happiness which should abundantly compensate their present sufferings. He replied, and they were some of his last words, "Ah! that is all I want."

This last effort of reason and speech, took place about eleven o'clock, on the night of the 1st of May. The languid current of life ebbed gradually away, until half past four, on the following morning; when he expired. His remains

were interred on the same day, in the burial ground attached to the church in the settlement: and though deposited by the hands of strangers, on a foreign and pagan shore, they rest under the sure protection of the christian's Saviour, and in "the certain hope of a glorious resurrection."*

In his person, Mr. Bacon was tall; the structure of his frame was masculine, and rather indicative of strength, than characterised by symmetry of proportion. His features were strongly marked; and the expression of his countenance blended an interesting pensiveness with the lineaments of an intelligent and vigorous mind. His attachments were ardent; his passions quick and violent; and his friendships affectionate and permanent. He was impatient of opposition, rapid in his movements, and determined in his purposes. Inflexible integrity, unbounded generosity, and a sincerity incapable of disguise, run through the entire texture of his character.

His learning was various; and his taste classical: but the first was not profound; nor the last exact. His legal acquirements were all of the useful kind; his standing at the bar respectable; and his professional reputation increasing.

By regeneration, every constitutional excellence was heightened, and a foundation laid for those pre-eminent spiritual attainments, in which

* See Appendix, Note IX.

he had few equals,—perhaps no superiors. His zeal has been seen to be ardent; his devotion entire; his hopes, elevated to sublimity; and his faith invincible. The love and fear of God tempered together in just proportions, formed the prevalent feeling of his heart; his very thoughts were prayer; his habit of obedience to the divine laws, prompt and unhesitating; and his 'love of the christian brother-hood, unfeigned.' The mystery of 'God manifest in the flesh,' and the character, work and offices of the Redeemer, formed the theme of his untiring admiration, his incessant rejoicing, his increasing gratitude, and his highest praise. In the service of such a Master, enforced by such motives, his talents, health, and life, were regarded as infinitely too cheap an offering. To Him, they were all deliberately consecrated: for Him, they were all cheerfully resigned. And his memory shall be blessed. The American church will long cherish it with affection: and it shall hereafter freshen in the hearts of millions in another hemisphere, when the work in which he fell shall have its consummation, in the civilization of Africa, the return of all her exiles, and the subjection of a countless population to the dominion of CHRIST.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I.

THE denomination of "Congregationalist," in reference to the religious societies of New England, is used in an appropriate, and not according to the original, sense of the term. In strict phraseology, several sects of Baptists and other Christians, in those, and the other states, are congregationalists, but known by different names. The term "Congregationalist" in its common use, designates the original and prevalent denomination, who adopt essentially, the same system of faith, and have ever been in christian fellowship, with the Presbyterians; from whom they differ only in their system of ecclesiastical government and discipline. The government and affairs of the church are administered by the whole congregation of communicants; of which each constitutes a separate and independent ecclesiastical body, which neither admits, nor exercises the controul of any other. This order sometimes, although improperly, are denominated Presbyterians.

NOTE II.

The direct testimony of Mr. Bacon to the general excellence of the New England character, cannot be withheld without disappointing an intention which he seems to have entertained, of publishing at some future period, a graphical illustration of the habits, morals, and religion of the people; with a view to the extermination of certain prejudices which so greatly detract from their just estimation in other sections of the country. The strongest of these prejudices, he correctly supposed, have their origin in ignorance. In the outline of these sketches, which Mr. Bacon prepared about two years previous to his death, the following very just observations occur. "In New England, the laws of the several states are generally better ex-

ecuted than in the middle and Southern states. Religion is much more generally attended to. Education is fostered, and good morals protected. But there is in the lower classes of the people, a species of low cunning and intrigue, which is sometimes rendered dangerous amongst a less suspicious and more ignorant people. It is this class of people who, finding their own laws too strict for them, generally remove to a distant part of the country, where their arts and deceptions find a better opportunity for action. Go amongst the people of that country, you will find them hospitable, moral, religious. Industry and hard labour, characterise the most of them. If it is asked what are the distinguishing traits of the New England character, it might be said, they are, enterprise, perseverance, shrewdness, industry and economy. Upon this subject much might be said. The character of these people is not understood."

NOTE III.

In an imperfect sketch of the present state of New England, which Mr. Bacon drew up a few years only before his death, he exercises on this subject, an unreasonable severity of reflection, which was unusual for him at that time to indulge on any other, and which can be best vindicated by attributing it *in part*, to the effects of early prejudice. The following remarks are extracted from these papers: "As to the religion of the New England states, the "Standing order" not unfrequently exercise some degree of persecution. All offices are attempted to be holden by them, and having the law on their side, they make all contribute to their worship, who do not produce written testimony that they contribute to some other mode. Every person is obliged to go to church once in three months, under a penalty; and sabbath-breaking is considered as a crime of no small magnitude. Yet too much hypocrisy may sometimes be seen under the demure garb and face of a congregationalist as well as others. It is predicted that the unnatural union of church and state will take place in those states, if not

guarded against. 'The standing order' will probably grow more and more arrogant and powerful, if the laws in their favour be not relaxed. One great advantage which they possess is, that 'power and authority' is on their side."

The allusion contained in the foregoing extract, to the public sentiment on the violation of the Sabbath, must not be understood as an expression of any other feeling in Mr. Bacon, than that of approbation. Of the crime of violating the Sabbath, no person was more sensible, or felt a deeper abhorrence than himself. It may be further remarked, and probably from a better knowledge of the actual tendency of the congregational system in New England at the present time, than Mr. Bacon possessed in 1817, that whatever consequences might be dreaded from the legal patronage enjoyed by that body, continuing in a state of religious languor, and general conformity to the world, the recent very extensive revival of true religion amongst them, has visibly arrested the aspiring tendencies of the system, and directed the ambition of a great portion of their members in the pursuit of far sublimer, and more appropriate objects.

NOTE IV.

Mr. Bacon was fully sensible of the imperfection of all his poetical productions. Being written for his own amusement, or the gratification of a few of his particular friends, they ought not to be too readily subjected to the eye of public criticism. The piece which follows, is taken without much attention to the selection, from those which have fallen into the hands of the writer; and offered as a fair specimen, (and one must suffice) of their general character. Its faults and beauties are alike apparent.

THE GHOST OF A SACHEM.

The war-song arose on the night's drowsy pinions,
It rose from the site, where his wigwam once stood:
On the banks of the Mohawk, his sire's wild dominions,
It roll'd in shrill echoes,—the *song* of the *wood*.

The sky-towering wilds of the untrodden mountains,
Reporting the full notes, by distance made mild;
The Mohawk's rude billows, in haste from their fountains,
In consonance echoed, "the *prince* of the *wild!*"

By the flash of the far distant fire's dying embers,
I saw the red chieftain arise from the earth;
He review'd each old haunt; for the *spirit remembers*
Each scene, that to joy or to sorrow gave birth.

His shoulders o'erspread with his battle-worn blanket,
His *ensigns* of *wildness* all *hung* by his side;
His wounds weeping blood, while his native earth drank it:
For the "ghost of the sachem" *appeared,* as he died.

"How oft," he exclaimed, "have my visits nocturnal
Been made to this spot, where my kindred all fell?
And let me still wander, "great spirit," supernal!
And still let the war-note on midnight's ear swell.

"My old oaks, that stood like my tribe, long unshaken,
Brav'd the tempest, and storm, and the elements' roar;
My warriors,—my tribe—the destroyer has taken;
The *children* of *nature* shall reign here no more.

"The time-moulder'd stumps of my forests now shew me,
They're *pilfered,* some *towering wigwam* to rear,
No more my *own lands,* as their sachem, shall know me;
Their vales are all furrowed—their groves are not here.

"The buffalo, hence, with his bulky distention,
The elk and the deer from the river banks hie;
The mammoths, that bellow'd in dreadful convention,
No more shall here battle with powers of the sky!

"The chase, that among yonder hill-tops resounded;
That fired the young red-man with enterprise high,
The yell, that exults, when the fleet deer is wounded,
No longer on wind or on breeze passes by.

"The council-fire's blaze, where I oft quell'd commotion,
No longer illumines the gloom of the night;
No longer arises the fire of devotion;
No longer the war-dance leads on to the fight;

"How oft have I *buried* the *blood-thirsty hatchet*!
For the *white man besought,* and the *sachem was brave!*
How oft did his *treachery* tempt me to snatch it;
And not e'en his wife or his little ones, save!

" In an hour of repose the fell rifle was level'd ;
It murder'd my boys, and my girls, and my wife !
The Mohawk received them; their straight hair dishevel'd:
It next sought their chief, and robb'd him too of life !

" But the day-star approaches the darkness to banish ;
I haste to the ' land of my fathers' in rest ;
The breezy dawn comes, and each spirit must vanish ;
The *grave* is my *home*, and the *darkness* my *guest*."

NOTE V.

At this season Mrs. Bacon had been for some time absent from Washington on a visit to her friends in Pennsylvania. Her approaching confinement was anticipated by her husband with the utmost solicitude. His feelings appear to have consisted of a singular mixture of social and religious affection, excited to an uncommon degree, and flowing forth indifferently towards all his friends. He composed, and constantly repeated, for a course of weeks, the following prayer, from which a few extracts are here inserted, as characteristic of the state of his mind at the time.

" Almighty and merciful God, wilt thou suffer a repentant sinner to throw himself at thy foot-stool at this time and implore thy pardoning mercy,—thy forgiving kindness. Oh, Father in Heaven, let me humbly thank thee for the blessings thou hast vouchsafed me for the day past and for all thy kindness thus far in life. Let me more especially pour out my soul before thee in gratitude, thankfulness and praise, for affording us the way of grace and the hopes of salvation through a Redeemer. Let me never forget to thank thee for this only source of happiness, revealed to us in thy holy word. O God, accept my thanks for thy past blessings on my wife and on our union : for the length of days and measure of health and comfort granted to my aged father, and for thy goodness and mercy to all my brothers and sisters and their several families. Forgive, O God, I humbly beseech thee, all our sins. Dispose and enable us to live a righteous and Godly life ; to repent of our sins

and thus make ourselves worthy of thy forgiving grace. Bless my father with health and strength ; and may he be at last prepared for, and receive thy pardoning grace. May my days be spent in doing good, and serving thee. May the offspring of our union be endowed with the senses and affections of human nature, capable of rendering it a blessing to its parents ; and may it be so educated as to serve thee in sincerity and truth, and at last be fitted for immortal life. Heavenly Father, teach me how to pray and what to pray for. Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done ; for thou hast so taught us to pray, 'Our father, &c.' "

NOTE VI.

An instance fully illustrative of the influence which sensible impressions assisted by the imagination, could exert on Mr. Bacon's judgment, while oppressed with bodily indisposition, occurs in his journal. Few will be disposed to resort to the supposition of a directly supernatural agency in order to account for the singular sensation ; nor is it considered necessary. That his mind was at the time in a most happy and elevated frame of devotion, and that the effect of the impression was entirely salutary ; there can be little doubt. Perhaps the pious reader may recollect sensations of his own mind of a similar kind, which, had they been assisted by a livelier imagination and a higher state of nervous excitability, might have had for a short time, the like imposing effect on his judgment.

"January 2d. This day my temporal business was less urgent, and I had leisure to rest; but was exercised with anxiety about the trying business of the approaching week. I was a few moments at the house of two of my neighbours ; and was requested to pray in both. My desires for more grace were strong and fervent. On returning to my lodgings, suddenly a bright light appeared to illuminate the whole room. I immediately rose up and looked about with surprise, but not with fear. I praised the Lord, and was happy—but remained for some time in a happy surprise : when it oc-

curred to me that I had lost my eye-sight, or that some material change had taken place in the organs of vision. I went out to ascertain whether I could discern objects by moonlight; as the night was a bright one. I found on trial, that my eyes were as usual. I then returned, and examined my stove; but not a spark of fire was to be found in it. No natural objects about me were rendered visible by it. My shutter and door were closed, and the light of the moon could not enter. Still the glorious vision continued; until at length, my doubts prevailed, and I lost it. I still regard it as a dispensation fraught with love to my soul; and often sigh, 'My God repeat that heavenly hour, that vision so divine.'"

NOTE VII.

The following is an abstract of the document promulgated on this occasion; which is given as illustrative of the equitable principle on which the society intend to act in the distribution of lands to African settlers.

Every married man arriving or marrying in the colony within one year from its commencement, to receive twenty-five acres for himself, twenty-four for his wife, and ten for each child, as near the town as convenient: and every family is entitled to a lot in town.

Every single man to receive thirty acres in the country, and a lot in town.

Minors, and females not included in the former classes, to be entitled each, to twenty-five acres of land, without the town.

Labourers and machanics, as a motive to industry and good conduct, to receive at the discretion of the agents, each ten acres in addition to the allotment above specified.

The agents only are authorised to buy or negotiate with the natives for land.

The colonists in order to hold their lands and lots, must reside in the colony and cultivate them.

Grants forfeitable by misconduct.

NOTE VIII.

It is not insinuated that the government of Sierra Leone positively interfered in preventing the extension of medical assistance to the colonists in Sherbro. But the utter indifference which even the officers of that colony seem to have evinced, to the unparallelled sufferings of the American people, demands an explanation. It is not pretended that any other obligation, than that which arises from the profession of a common christianity, and the possession of a common nature, rested on them to afford relief to their afflicted fellow beings in this case. Let the cruel perfidy of the two unprincipled individuals referred to in the memoir, rest with themselves: the cause of humanity demands of the gentle men attached to the board of direction of the English government at Sierra Leone, a vindication from what *appears to* have been a conduct in direct violation of its most sacred laws.

Perhaps it is due to the justice of Heaven to state, that one of the two English visitants to Campelar on the 28th, met, shortly after his return, a sudden and violent death: and the other is believed to be now undergoing an infamous punishment for felony.

The clergymen and missionaries of Sierra Leone, are from their circumstances and duties, to be entirely excepted from any part of the foregoing censure.

NOTE IX.

Mr. Bankson continued to amend, for a few days, when he was subjected to a fatal relapse, which carried him off on the 18th of May. Mr. Doughen recovered, and returned to the United States. The whole crew of the Augusta and about twenty of the black people, died. The remainder in a few weeks regained their health; of whom the greatest number continued under the care of the Rev. Daniel Coker in Sierra Leone, until the month of March, 1821, when new agents arrived with supplies, and a reinforcement of colonists, from the United States.

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